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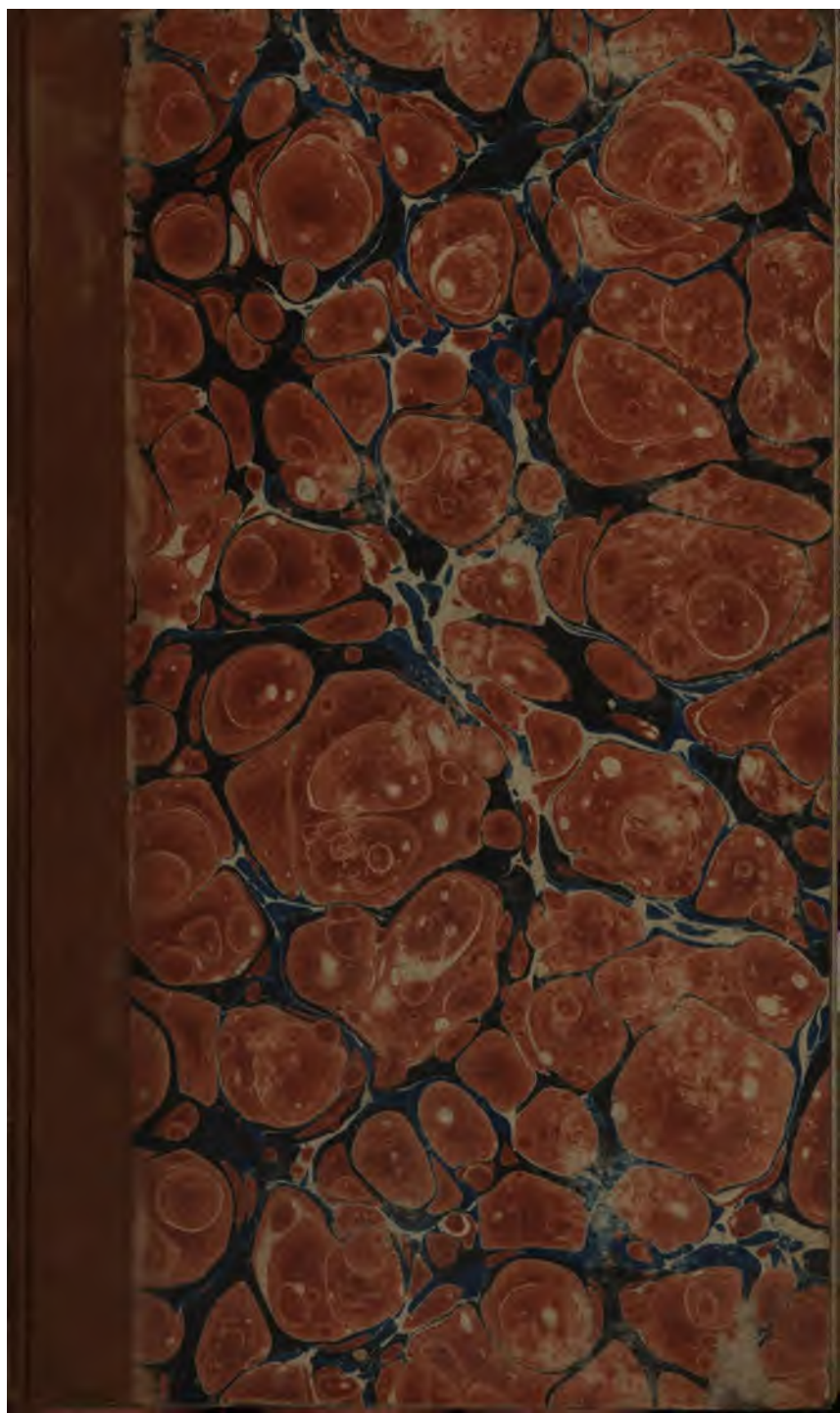
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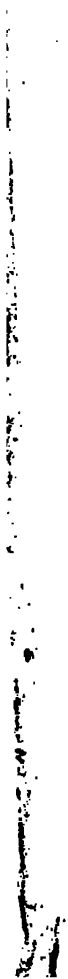
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VIEWS
ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE
MALTESE LANGUAGE
AND ITS USE
FOR THE PURPOSES OF
Education and Literature.

BY THE
REV. C. F. SCHLIENZ.



 MALTA,

1838.

“Ego Orientales mihi populos selegi, primos terræ habitatores, primos doctrinæ omnis et eruditionis parentes, à quibus, quicquid reliqui populi habent divinæ ac salutiferæ scientiæ, dimanavit: à quibus etiam quicquid habent impiæ superstitionis originem traxit, horum linguis apprime delector, horum res libenter tracto.” De Dien’s Dedication in his דקדוק לשוננו הקדמ Gram. Ling. Orient.

“To propose, then, the application of a new system of education to any country, much more to think of the alteration of an old,—to attempt education reform even in its most limited sense, would unquestionably be a folly of the grossest description, unless it proceeded, in both instances, in direct reference to the condition of the country.

But this condition is the result of many complex circumstances. It is not composed of actual opinions or peculiarities only, but of tendencies to produce new tendencies, which, though still in germ, are destined to grow out in due season to opinions still more important, perhaps, than those which they were fated to succeed.” T. Wyse, Esq. M. P. on Education Reform, p. 1.

PREFACE.

THE views advanced in the following letters were originally designed to be communicated to C. H. Bracebridge, Esq; a gentleman, well known for the interest he has lately taken in the cause of education in the Mediterranean countries; yet as they refer to a subject which vitally affects the welfare of this island, I venture upon respectfully submitting them to the Maltese Public, in the hope that they may contribute toward the furtherance of that important object which every well wisher of Malta ought to have deeply at heart,—the education of its native population. In so doing, I am encouraged by the kind approbation of some highly esteemed friends, to whose judgment on such a subject, I deem the greatest deference to be due, and by whose kind suggestions and corrections the original form of these letters has been considerably improved; a favour this, for which I beg to render them herewith my best acknowledgments.

Although not a Maltese myself, yet an attentive perusal of these pages may perhaps satisfy the candid reader, as to whether my humble opinion advocated therein, is worthy the regard of the Maltese or not. But I must beg of the friend of humanity, and of the lover of truth, to weigh well the general scope of my argument, and to follow it out, with an unbiassed mind, in the different relations which it sustains, before he decides on the question. The deep and extensive evils, existing here on account of the hitherto defective, and in point of language, perverse mode of education, have induced me to propose a *gradual, total change of the whole system*. Such a

PREFACE.

proposal may probably, at first sight, startle some, who will be ready to charge it with impracticability or presumption, perhaps with both. Yet I would fain hope, that the enlightened, who shall fairly consider this subject, especially in the relation it bears to the intellectual, moral and civil condition of the Maltese people, and to the position of their island, will have reason to come to a different conclusion respecting it. But should I even succeed in acquiring the most flattering opinion of the best class of the community; valuable as that would be, yet, as mere opinion, be it ever so favourable, would fall short of accomplishing the plan I am about to propose; my ultimate aim cannot consist in such an acquisition, but in gaining the good will of the people, expressed in their readiness to adopt, and in their perseverance to execute such measures, as will secure to them, generally, the inestimable blessings of an education, most suitable to their minds and circumstances.

And should my humble endeavours be made in any way instrumental to further such a desirable object, I shall deem myself most amply rewarded for any trouble bestowed on it.

C. F. S.

Valletta, Nov. 10. 1837.



FIRST LETTER.



Malta, October 26th. 1837.

MY DEAR SIR,

Allow me, to express to you my sincere thanks for your kind enquiries about the Arabic Schools at Malta. I regret, that I cannot give you more encouraging accounts respecting them. Plans of education, however, as well as many other things which refer to the improvement of the present condition of our Island, have been put into the hands of the Commissioners of Special Enquiry, and amongst them, there is wrapt up also my humble opinion as to the education of the Maltese.

I doubt not, that besides the suggestions which I have ventured to offer, the Commissioners have also received many other opinions on this important subject, and that due consideration will be given them in the formation of their own plan.

As they are both gentlemen of known talent, and appear to be well acquainted with our German mode of education, and favourably disposed towards it, I would fain hope, that we may justly anticipate something worthy of an enlightened and paternal government.

The consideration, *which should be the principal language taught and cultivated*, will, I conceive, not be the least important in the formation of a general plan for the education of the Maltese. People here differ very much in their opinion on this subject. Some are for making English the prevailing language of these Islands; some the Maltese dialect; and others again are for dismissing both these, and giving exclusive preference to the Italian.

By your kind enquiry after our *Arabic* schools you probably anticipate my own opinion, viz. that the Arabic language, of which the Maltese is a dialect, should be made here the basis of all instruction.

You are aware I have not come to this conclusion hastily; and, I am sure, you will not charge me with presumption in forming it, as you know the attention I have paid to the Maltese language during a residence in Malta of more than ten years, and that during this time, the Arabic, the parent of the Maltese, has been my constant study.

With these qualifications, I hope, I may be permitted to give an opinion, and to entreat the serious attention of every well wisher of the Maltese to the remarks I have the honour now to address to you.

In treating of this subject I propose to consider the following three heads:—

1. The inconveniencies and evils arising to the Maltese from the present state of language among them.

2. The hitherto defective modes of obviating them.

3. That mode, by the adoption of which, we think the existing evils may not only be obviated, but also great advantages obtained.

Previous to treating of the inconveniences experienced by the inhabitants of these islands with regard to language, I must solicit your attention to a few remarks on the actual state of the Maltese language; for, as the validity of our argument chiefly rests upon the right understanding of this point, it is of the greatest importance that it should first be cleared up.

The Rev. S. Swinton says: (Philosophical Transactions, R. S. Vol. XII. p. 18.) The Punic tongue is even at this day the *vernacular language* of the *lower class* of the Maltese, though deformed by many corruptions and disguised by the accession of various foreign words." The opinion which Mr. Swinton here advances, confessedly taken from Sig. Agius (*De Soldanis della lingua Punica presentamente usata dai Maltesi.*—in Roma 1750,) and advocated by several other writers, who like Swinton were in want of the proper means of passing a right judgment on this question, is defective in two points: First, it designates the Maltese language as the *Punic* tongue; and secondly, it limits its use to the lower class of the people. As the question with respect to the Punic character of the modern Maltese tongue has been already fairly considered, and especially in recent days satisfactorily settled by very competent judges, some of whom are among the first Oriental scholars, it may perhaps not be amiss to adduce first their opinions.

The learned Majus in his second treatise on the "*Lingua Punica in hodierna Melitensium superstite*," advances the opinion, that the foundation of the Maltese is Arabic, though it contains a number of ancient Punic words. It is not improbable, that this excellent scholar would have expressed himself still more

in favour of the Arabic character of the Maltese language, had he possessed ampler materials to form his judgment upon, than the small collection of Maltese words and phrases transmitted to him through the Jesuit Ribier de Gattis. The late Sig. Vassalli, in his Preface to his first Maltese Grammar, *Mylsen Phœnico-Punicum*, published at Rome 1791 in the Latin tongue, as well as in the Preface to his Maltese Dictionary, published 1796, advances views very similar to those of Agius; but in his last Italian-Maltese Grammar, he ceases to advocate them. Baron De Sacy in his treatise on the Maltese language says: (*Journal des Savans*, Avril 1829. p. 196.) "We observe with pleasure, that he (Vassalli) abstains from assigning to a form of language which is evidently nothing but a vulgar dialect of the language of the Arabs of Africa, such an ancient origin. Indeed we must not be surprised, that a dialect of the Arabic language exhibits in its nomenclature a great analogy with the Syriac, the literal Ethiopic, the Chaldean, even the Hebrew, and consequently also the Phœnician. But by taking very little pains in comparing the grammatical forms of the Maltese with those of the Arabic, one may soon be convinced, that the Maltese is an immediate branch of this language, which was introduced into the Islands of Malta and Gozo, under the reign of the Arabs."

Dr. Gesenius, in his "*Versuch über die Maltesische Sprache*," Leipzig, 1810 (Treatise on the Maltese language) after a lengthened comparison of the Maltese with the Arabic, comes to the same conclusion as the above distinguished French Orientalist, viz. that the Maltese language is but a vulgar dialect of the Arabic,

characterized by a few foreign and peculiar expressions, and many provincialisms. With regard to these peculiarities we beg to refer to the Appendix, where they are fully considered.

The result of the labours of these two Oriental scholars on this subject, presents, however, nothing *new*, but simply confirms what had already been stated by the historian Ciantar: (Malta Illustrata Lib. II. Not. IX p. 681.) “Il Maltese idioma è comune, come si sa, a tutta l’Africa, (?) all’ Egitto, ed alla Soria; e l’ uso di esso si stende infino alle Indie: ed è molto affine al Caldeo, ed Ebraico: *imperciocchè non è altro, che l’ Arabico.*” At page 680 of the same work, the author again informs us: “that a slight acquaintance with the Arabic language and the modern Maltese is enough to convince us, *that they differ in nothing but in pronunciation.* The fact is, that the Arabs and the Maltese easily understand each other.” To find the language of those ancient and interesting nations, the Phœnicians and Carthaginians, still preserved in the Maltese, as Swinton and Agius have advocated, would have been truly a most interesting and valuable discovery. But considering the long period of the reigns of the Greeks, the Goths and the Romans, in these Islands, especially the latter, who, in their deadly hatred of the Carthaginians, took the utmost pains to destroy every trace of the existence of that distinguished nation, it does not appear very probable, that the Punic language should have been so long preserved in Malta. Beside, the existence of the Punic in the present Maltese would seem to require a demonstrative proof from the very nature of the language itself. But how shall that proof be given? What criterion have we to guide

us in ascertaining the Phœnician character of the Maltese language? There are no Phœnician books or manuscripts for reference, and the whole treasure extant of the Punic language in ancient monuments, towards which Malta has contributed her mite, scarcely exceeds forty words. (Major Pierer Universal Lexicon, under the article Phœnikische Sprache, Altenburg 1835.) As these may be explained solely by the aid of the Hebrew and Chaldaic, without any reference to the Arabic, these two languages will alone serve for ascertaining, whether or not the Maltese is likely to be of Punic origin. The object of such an examination, however, could not be to discover, whether the Maltese contains words, which are also found in these two languages, and whether these Maltese words bear some analogy in their grammatical forms and construction to those of the Hebrew and the Chaldaic, for, as De Sacy and Ciantar have well observed, such must be the case, even if the Maltese be nothing else but an Arabic dialect, inasmuch as the Arabic, the Hebrew and the Chaldaic are kindred tongues, and according to some, only different dialects of one language; but the point to be determined is, whether the Maltese contains such words as in their form and signification are not found in the Arabic, but only in the Hebrew or the Chaldaic; and whether these words exhibit such grammatical forms and construction as are not in accordance with the *Arabic*, but with the *Hebrew* and the *Chaldaic*, or at least apply *rather* to *these* than to the Arabic. But we have already seen that the Maltese language does not stand in this predicament, but that the whole treasure of its words, with the exception of very few indeed, are

purely Arabic, and conform in every respect to the rules, nay even to the anomalies of the Arabic Grammar. (See the Appendix to these letters.)

Any one, therefore, who has any knowledge of these oriental languages, must relinquish the idea of regarding the Maltese as *Phœnician*, but will at once pronounce it to be *Arabic*. To call the Maltese a Punic tongue, only because it contains a very *few words*, whose origin may be traced to times previous to the reign of the Arabs in Malta, would be a gross absurdity, and a violation of every principle of philology.

With quite as much, perhaps with more reason, we might call the present language of the Barbary States (where, according to St. Jerome in Ep. ad Galat. the Phœnician was in the fifth century still vernacular) a Punic tongue, inasmuch as that language is somewhat richer than the Maltese, though it bears the same character. The same argument would also apply to the present language of Syria, the birth place of the Phœnicians, and finally to all Arabic countries. Indeed, according to this arbitrary standard, which, unaided by history, and disregarding the greater portion of the words of a language, as well as their grammatical bearings, would assume to characterize a tongue only according to the nature of a few of its words,* any people, if their language only contain a sentence of Semitic origin, might, with equal justice with the Maltese, maintain, its being the same with that of the reputed inventors of letters, the Phœnicians. Passing by the various absurdities into which such a standard of judging would evidently

* Sig. G. A. Micallef, in his Historical Catechism p. 33 adduces *two words*, purely *Arabic*, as a proof that the Maltese is a *Phœnician* language!

betray us, what we have said with regard to it, may suffice to show, that it is a deceptive and unsafe criterion, and consequently inadequate for proving or ascertaining the true character of a -language. The only true way of obtaining a right judgment on such a subject, is to bring language to a strict and impartial examination as to its etymology, grammatical forms and construction, and if so, as we have already said, by such a trial, the Maltese does not bear the character of the Phœnician, but of the Arabic language. Even respecting the few words, which have been considered by Oriental scholars as being of a time anterior to the domination of the Arabs in Malta, it would perhaps be difficult to give *incontrovertible* proof. They may perhaps be regarded as obsolete Arabic words, with no less probability than as Phœnician. Other Arabic dialects have *many* words, which are not found in writing, but they are not on this account the less regarded as Arabic. Why then should we make such words in the *Maltese* Phœnician? In whatever light, therefore, we consider the question, it warrants the belief, that the Modern Maltese is not an ancient Punic, but strictly an Arabic dialect. I thought it the more necessary to dwell at some length on this point, as I apprehend the erroneous opinions very generally entertained respecting it, have proved highly prejudicial to the Maltese. The most intelligent among them appear to have refrained from cultivating their language, and applying it to useful purposes, from the mistaken notion of its obsolete character. The fallacy and futility of such unhappy prejudices I have endeavoured to expose.

I must not omit to call your attention to another

mistake, often made, and into which Mr. Swinton has also fallen, viz. that the Malta Arabic dialect is said to be spoken *only* by the *lower class* of the people. To answer this, there needs no lengthened argument, as it is well enough known to any one acquainted with Malta, that the mother tongue of its natives is the language, universally spoken by high and low, the inhabitants of the towns as well as of the villages.

After these few remarks respecting the Arabic dialect spoken by the natives of Malta, I come to notice the use of the Italian. And here it is, that I shall show, as proposed, the peculiar inconvenience and evils experienced by the Maltese, from the state of things with regard to language.

The Italian was introduced into these Islands, during the existence of the Sicilian Government, and has ever since been in use chiefly among the upper, but partly also among the middle classes of the inhabitants of the towns, in addition to their native tongue. A general use has also been made of this language for conducting the affairs of Government, for the proceedings in the Courts of Justice, and law proceedings generally, for Ecclesiastical matters, for the transaction of Commercial business, and for the purposes of education. But, up to the present moment, the mother tongue of the people, namely the Maltese language, has continued in use throughout the country and at Gozo, and also among the poorer classes in the towns, who in reality, form the majority of the people, and to whom it has been, and still is, their only organ of communication, whilst, by the upper classes, it continues to be chiefly used in the common affairs of social life.

From such singularly unsettled and mixed use of

language, what can accrue but the obstruction of the spread of intelligence and knowledge. Thus situated, the interests of the people are divided, a small minority thereby enjoying at least some of the means of civilization, and of obtaining advancement and influence, whilst the greatest part of their fellow citizens must feel themselves doomed to perpetual obscurity.

At the time when Malta was first connected with Sicily, the evils arising from such a state of things were not so great as they afterwards became, and especially as they exist at present. The Arabic language had been then in use in Sicily for as long a time as at Malta, and it could not have been a difficult task for the Sicilian Government to procure such persons for conducting their public affairs here, as were familiar with the language of the natives, and who could easily keep up an intercourse with them, ascertain their wants, and devise the proper means to meet them. But in the present days circumstances are materially altered. The Maltese language is now entirely unknown to Europeans, and not being a written language, is hardly ever attempted to be acquired by them. The natural consequence is, that the greater part of the people live in a state, secluded as it were from the rest of the civilized world; a correct knowledge of their actual circumstances, of their wants and capabilities is very difficult to be obtained, and from the want of it the improvement of their condition must be checked.

Being thus left to themselves, it is impossible for us to form a conjecture as to the period when the poorer classes of the Maltese will become possessed of well cultivated minds, and when they will no longer be stigmatized by the reproachful epithet *an uneducated*

people." For, how, we may ask, shall *they* begin the praiseworthy task of education? What resources have they to effect it? Let us even suppose, that they possessed the desire, the capability, with the opportunity and pecuniary means necessary for such an undertaking, still one of the most formidable barriers remains to obstruct their way, and paralyze their efforts, viz. the peculiarly unsettled state of their language. For in what language, it may be asked, shall they be educated? Shall it be in their own? "Impossible!" it is replied; it is little better than a corrupt jargon, and quite unfit for the purposes of education. Shall it be in the Italian? The answer to this is, of this language the poorer classes are entirely ignorant, and cannot reasonably be expected to acquire a knowledge of it, unless by means of their own language; and as this is deemed unfit for educational purposes, the attempt to acquire the Italian will either not be made at all, or if made, will only at the best partially succeed. Proofs of the failure of attempts at such kind of instruction we shall give in our second letter.

It must appear evident from what has been said, that a large portion of the people will always have to grow up ill informed, and wholly uneducated. Such is a fair way of reasoning, and such the melancholy practical result, which such a state of language as exists at Malta at present produces, and, unless changed into something better, will always produce, on one of the prime causes of the welfare of a people, the education of the lower classes. But some may perhaps question the extensiveness of the evil just noticed, as it may be said, that the people may obtain orally through their numerous clergy, every necessary information relative

to their moral welfare. To this we would answer, it is not certain that people can always obtain, in this manner, such information; for, in the supposed case, the priest must of course himself be a thoroughly informed, highly educated and enlightened person. That a portion of the clergy of Malta are entitled to such a character we ourselves can testify; but that this should be the character of the *whole body*, cannot, judging from the defective system of their education, and the literary means they possess, be reasonably expected. In fact, such an immense responsibility, as would in this case rest upon them, would, especially in these our days, be found too great, even by the clergy of those countries which enjoy every possible advantage for education and literature. Nor can we take it for granted, even if the priests were possessed of the adequate means, in point of knowledge, to give to the people every necessary information relative to the welfare and improvement of their condition, that they would always do so, for without entering into this part of the subject, it is evident, there are many things that may influence them in the giving or withholding such information.

Moreover, the task of communicating verbally all that knowledge which a people ought to possess, so as to place them on a level with our enlightened age, would encroach so much on the time and attention of the priest, as would render it utterly impossible for him, be his good will and competency what they might, to perform such a labour satisfactorily, without neglecting some other more direct and important parts of his ministerial duty.

But even supposing what is most improbable, that

every difficulty should be obviated, and all circumstances conspire to render the priest a universally competent and ever ready organ of communication to the lower classes of the people, yet they, as well as the community in general, would still greatly suffer through the want of an express education. Unenlightened in many respects, as to the knowledge of what relates to their best interests and their obligations to society, dependant on the judgment and will of a few individuals, unable of themselves to improve their condition, and unfit for every private or public employment, for which man can be only qualified by a suitable education, their condition, depending, as we have supposed, on their clergy, would still be distressing, and present an evil so serious and extensive, that any who might have it in their power, especially the Government, ought to use every possible legitimate means to remove it, whenever it came within the reach of their influence.

But the present state of things with regard to language at Malta, proves not only injurious to the education of the lower, it affects also that of the upper classes. As to the children of the latter, their education may generally be called, in point of language, Italian. Italian is spoken in their houses, and it is in this language that they are instructed at school. And yet it is not in the Italian, but in the Maltese that their children receive their first moral impressions, and in which they are accustomed to form and to express their earliest ideas. This is the language they are constantly habituated to hear from their nurses, their fathers, mothers and companions, in which they are commonly addressed, in which they themselves con-

verse, and in which most of the conversation of the domestic circle is carried on. Thus, during their tenderest years, from two to six or seven, they *generally* learn very little Italian, whilst, on the other hand, they insensibly acquire a great part of the Maltese. But now when the time for their instruction arrives, the first lesson they have to learn is their own as well as their parents' misfortune, in having for their mother tongue a language of which they are practically taught, no use whatever can be made, as to what chiefly concerns that first great desideratum to man, his education. Or, if their own language be fit for use in education, they have to lament the injustice of their parents, by whom their intellects are needlessly forced either wholly or partially into a strange channel, wherein, especially at the beginning, their natural flow is cramped and impeded; for if the operations of a child's mind are to be carried on in a language altogether foreign to him, and which has not the slightest analogy with his own, the progress of his learning will be materially retarded by the difficulties he meets with at every step, and the consciousness of his slow advancement will deprive him of one of the most valuable stimulus to persevere in his studies.

Moreover, it ought to be remembered, that even after school education is terminated, there still remains the conflict of two languages for predominance constantly at work, both in the habits of thought and speech. And however unappreciated the mother tongue of the Maltese may be, its use cannot be dispensed with. Yes! there it is, and its use too is withal not the least important. It is still, as we have said, the language on which the mind mainly exercises itself in the formation of

ideas, to which the organs of speech remain accustomed during life, in which moral evidence is constantly brought home to the feelings, and which is chiefly, almost solely used in the most endearing relations of life. Its influence upon the mind is therefore the most extensive and profound. It is par excellence *the language of the Maltese*, and the Italian is still, after all the labour they may bestow upon it, but a foreign language, and is treated as such.

Although under existing circumstances the Maltese people may perhaps not be really conscious of the difference between thinking, speaking, and writing in a foreign, instead of one's own native tongue, yet if they were to make the trial, they would find, what has been observed by universal experience, that no man can think, speak or write with the same ease, fluency, clearness and energy in a foreign language, that he can do in his own. The inference arising from this is quite evident, viz. that it must be extremely difficult for the Maltese, even with the best talent and most commendable industry, to attain proficiency in their studies, since it is by means of a foreign language they pursue them; and that the utmost to be expected, is to find them attaining a mediocrity, which will always leave them behind in literary distinctions.

But the perverseness of this mode of instruction does not only prove injurious to the upper but to the lower classes likewise; for, as these generally copy the example of their superiors, they naturally imitate also their mode of instruction, which in the present case causes them to labour under the greatest disadvantages.

If the Maltese was cultivated, at least so far as to be used as a medium for acquiring foreign languages,

the lower classes might then be nearly on a par with the upper as to the means of acquiring the Italian; but having been taught the futility of endeavouring to make their own language subserve the purpose of instruction, we cannot be surprised, if any trial to acquire the Italian without the assistance thereof, should in most instances prove abortive. And hence it is, that this Italian education, introduced into this island by foreigners, and carried on to some extent by those who possessed the means for so doing, has undesignedly contributed not a little, to keep the lower classes, destitute as they are of such means, in an uneducated state. How different would the aspect of things have been, had education been pursued by the upper classes in the Arabic instead of the Italian. Had this been done from the time of the introduction of the latter, the lower classes, capable as they would then have been of copying their example, might in all probability have had at this day a flourishing state of education among them.

In these remarks I trust I shall not be misunderstood, and be supposed to object to the learning of the Italian. No one can more highly prize the advantages arising from the study of foreign languages than I do, both individually and generally, and especially at Malta in reference to the countries around the Mediterranean. Such study extends useful knowledge, it makes us acquainted with the manners and customs, the ideas, the sciences, arts and occupations, the civil and religious condition of other nations, and thus tends to remove that fatal prejudice, so destructive to its possessor, arising from the self-complacency of an uninformed mind, which induces him to excuse and

even to extol his own deficiencies, whilst he remains blind as to the real excellencies of others. And as moreover the Italian is one of the better cultivated languages of civilized Europe, its acquisition is doubtless beneficial and praiseworthy, provided it do not absorb an undue portion of the time and attention of the scholar. To its application, therefore, we can never object, nor can we object to the early time at which children generally commence their study of it, since it is the only sure way of obtaining facility and correctness in speaking. Locke teaches in this respect a right doctrine. He says: "The first season to get foreign languages, and to *form the tongue to their true accent*, I should think, should be from seven to fourteen or sixteen." (Thoughts concerning education.) My argument, however, does not refer to the mere *learning* of the Italian, but to the too high estimation in which its use has so long been held at Malta, even while under the English Government;—to the fact, that as a foreign language, existing here only by way of courtesy, it should have occupied the prominence of being adopted as the basis of all instruction among the natives, whilst the cultivation of their mother tongue has been entirely neglected. But even regarding this question merely in the light of acquiring foreign languages, it may still admit of a doubt, whether the best interests of the Maltese are consulted in giving such a decided preference to the study of the Italian. There are no longer those inducements which the Maltese had some centuries ago for an extensive cultivation of this language. True, the Italians still remain their neighbours, yet the intercourse between Italy and Malta is not very lively; and as to Malta itself, the inhabitants may live here

quite as much in the enjoyment of the comforts of life, of the benefits of good society, of the protection and support of Government, and of the blessings of religion, without the knowledge of the Italian as with it. Why, therefore, should the Maltese, whose general interests are so intimately blended with those of Great Britain, give a preference to the Italian over the English, especially as the former, neither with regard to its literary consequence, nor its practical usefulness, can be compared to the English?

One of the true tests of a good education is, that it frees man from narrowmindedness, and prepares and renders him desirous, as far as his capacity goes, to fill a station where he may exercise the greatest possible usefulness. Now, considering the nature of the two languages, the English and the Italian, together with their respective literature, in reference to the aid which foreigners, and especially the Maltese may derive from the knowledge of either for this important purpose, the former certainly presents a paramount excellency. For, as it is one of the most predominant languages now extant upon the earth, so is its literature the most replete with practical usefulness. Its philosophy may in an eminent sense be called *practical*. It is a picture of an almost unbroken series of experiments, inventions, enterprises, expeditions, discoveries, monuments of arts, illustrious deeds, examples, &c. Its most *prominent* parts, particularly in our days, refer to what is emphatically called *useful* knowledge. It is the mercantile language of the world, and may be compared to a gigantic chain, which connects a great part of the interests of many nations. It is the language of real philanthropy, and as such, is like a solar circle, within

whose vast circumference the moral sun of heavenly glory never sets, but continually enlightens the dark corners of the earth, and improves the condition of mankind. Whatever excellencies other languages may possess, there can be no doubt that Providence uses the *English*, preeminently, as the language of civilization, and as a chief instrument in promoting the welfare and happiness of mankind.* I think I am warranted in saying, that there is no civilized nation in Europe, in which there are not many individuals among the upper classes who pay much attention to the learning of the English language. In Germany, especially, where people are not accustomed to act, in things which vitally affect the moral condition of a people, without sufficient reason, a preference is given to the study of the English. (See Dr. Niemeyer's *Grundsätze der Erziehung und des Unterrichts*, zweiter Theil p. 269.) But still more in the British Colonies in America, the South and South-Western parts of Africa, the South Sea Islands, and recently also in the East Indies, the knowledge of the English language is sought after. Why then should Malta be made as it were the unique spot where it is treated with comparative indifference, and a preference given to the study of another foreign language? Have not the Maltese as subjects of Great Britain, if it were for no other reason, the strongest motives for acquiring it? Would not the knowledge of this language be among their best means for becoming well acquainted with the character of the government, the laws, the institutions

* Reference will again be had to the English and Italian languages, with regard to their use for mercantile as well as local purposes, in the third letter.

and the moral resources of Great Britain; and as subjects of that kingdom, ought they not to possess a correct knowledge of these things, even if they exhibited less excellency than they do? If the knowledge of the Italian, when under the Sicilian Government, was deemed a desirable object to be acquired on account of the political relation of Malta with Italy, surely the knowledge of the English ought to be considered as infinitely more desirable and important, on account of its political relation to Great Britain! Is there a Maltese who does not think himself entitled to claim equal privileges with any Englishman, on the ground of his being a subject of the same nation? But, by neglecting the study of the English language, must he not remain in a great measure ignorant of that knowledge which cannot but be regarded as one of the best means of becoming acquainted with, and also of attaining these privileges. The qualification of the Maltese as British subjects for the service of their Sovereign and country, and consequently their civil usefulness, may be in many cases vitally affected by their knowledge or ignorance of the English language. Such a neglect would be particularly blamable, if it could be laid to the charge of the upper classes, as they have constant access to the best English society, and thus the fairest opportunities of acquiring a knowledge of their language, and of learning to speak it with taste and correctness; advantages which they do not enjoy to an equal extent with regard to the Italian.

But in proportion as education is affected by the present state of language at Malta, in the same proportion all the great interests of humanity will of course have to suffer. Man's dignity of character as a rational

creature, as well as his adaptation for usefulness, depend in a very high degree upon the nature of his education. Whatever a man's calling in life may be, it is only by a suitable education joined with his natural abilities, that he will be enabled to enter upon it with any degree of certainty of obtaining adequate success. The whole state of society in all its ramifications will be affected in proportion as the people generally excel, or fall short, in point of education. "I think I may say, that of all the men we meet with, nine out of ten, are what they are, good or bad, useful or not, according to their education. 'Tis this which makes the great difference in mankind." (Locke's Thoughts concerning education.) The history of the world, the history of every nation, nay, of each individual past and present, unite as with one voice to confirm the truth of this doctrine. There can be no doubt, that the great superiority at present shown by Europe and North America, compared with other parts of the world, in point of knowledge, activity, improvement, and especially the immense influence they exercise as to the affairs of this world, and the destinies of mankind, is chiefly owing to the general superior education of their population.

But there is no need to dwell long upon a point which is admitted on all sides; nor is there any necessity to point out its application to Malta. We have only to look at the far larger portion of her population and to lament their condition. Before closing this letter, I would, however, be permitted to mention one or two points more, to show further the great inconveniencies arising to the community, from the present state of language at Malta.

The best resources of a people lie in the state of their morals, and any thing tending to injure these, must also tend to corrode the vitality of their happiness and prosperity. The most civilized nations and highly educated individuals have rapidly fallen to ruin, when once they became defective in this particular. This is a natural result and of universal application. Now, that which chiefly influences, in either corrupting or improving the morality of mankind, is undoubtedly *example*, both good and bad. The mental and moral faculties of men develop themselves by the exercise of the same power, the power of *imitation*. The child imitates human speech, even without often understanding it, and so it likewise imitates human actions. The behaviour, habits, manners and customs of the circle in which he grows up, and by which he is constantly surrounded, is the only book from which he learns, in living characters, his first moral lessons. But when the time for reflection comes, although he continues, and will continue to the end of life, drawing from the conduct of others rules and directions for his own, yet, at that important period, a *new* source of moral instruction opens to him, and that source is *language*. He is told how to behave, what to do, and what to leave undone. Commands, rewards and corrections are frequently given, explained and enforced in language. And, although the force of such instruction lies chiefly in the good example of those who give it, yet something depends also upon the *manner* in which it is given; and on this account, I think the want of a well cultivated language to be a great disadvantage with regard to moral education. As long as moral precepts are given, and obedience is

enforced verbally, such disadvantage may not perhaps be so much felt, but should it be deemed desirable or necessary, that those moral lessons be given in writing or in print, either in a most defective language, or in one neither accessible nor intelligible to the majority, and even presenting difficulties to the few, the inconvenience must no doubt become more apparent. Clear, distinct, unequivocal language as to the nature of the command, the way of obedience, the reward or punishment, is a chief requisition in moral instruction. And as moral instruction, inseparably connected as it is with that of religion, involves the highest interests of man, it is important that such language should be used with the utmost faithfulness.

But in what language shall this be done at Malta? In the Italian? Then only a small minority of the people will understand it, whilst the greatest part will not understand it at all, or only imperfectly. Or, shall it be done in the Maltese? Then people may perhaps question the correctness of the instruction, since, as we have shewn, the Maltese are taught to regard their language as a miserable jargon unworthy of such a distinction, in which, of course, according to this opinion, no matters of importance can be satisfactorily treated. What method is therefore to be pursued? Shall all the people be left entirely without moral instruction? Or, if this inconvenience be deemed too great, is the mass of the people to be left untaught? Are only the very few to be instructed in their moral duties who understand the Italian language? If one or the other of these objectionable paths was taken, people would act somewhat consistently, as being the only choice to which, under their

present circumstances they seemingly could resort ; yet I am glad to say that neither of them has been followed, and I shall find opportunity, in the second letter, for explaining the nature of that inefficient alternative, which has been adopted with a view to counteract this evil.

The last inconvenience which I shall briefly notice, refers to a subject by no means of little importance, the *Civil law*. The remarks which have just been offered as to the morality of the people, apply in a great degree also to this. If it is of importance in a community, that the laws be strictly obeyed, it is of equal importance, likewise, that the people be duly acquainted with them. " Civil liberty, rightly understood, consists in the power of doing whatever the laws permit, which is only to be effected by a general conformity of all, orders and degrees to those equitable rules of action, by which the meanest individual is protected from the insults and oppression of the greatest. As, therefore, every subject is interested in the preservation of the laws, it is *incumbent upon every man to be acquainted* with those at least, with which he is immediately concerned, lest he incur the censure as well as inconvenience of living in society without knowing the obligations which it lays him under." (Sir W. Blackstone's Commentaries, Vol. I. p. 30.) But here also the same sad question forces itself upon us : How shall the Maltese become acquainted with the laws ? In what *language* shall they learn the *carmen necessarium*, a just knowledge of their natural rights, the rule of their civil conduct, and the nature, the great advantages, nay, the blessings of the Government under which they live ? For again, if this knowledge is to be acquired

in the Italian, the *greater part* of the people are excluded from the benefits thereof; and if in the Maltese, it may perhaps admit of a doubt, whether, according to the notions entertained respecting this language, the laws are always rightly translated and interpreted, or a clear and full knowledge of the constitution of their country is conveyed to the people. How difficult such a task is, under the present imperfect and unsettled state of the Maltese language, must be best known to those gentlemen of the legal profession, to whose honorable charge this important duty is chiefly committed.

I might easily dwell further on the various kinds of inconveniencies, arising from the present state of language at Malta; but I have trespassed already too long on your time, and besides, I think the remarks I have already made, are quite sufficient to show, that they are serious enough to render it desirable they should, if possible, be obviated.

The modes which have hitherto been employed to accomplish so desirable an end, shall form the subject of my next letter.



SECOND LETTER.



One cannot suppose, that inconveniencies so serious and so extensive as those specified in my last letter, would be permitted to continue, without efforts being made, and measures adopted, in order to counteract them. Accordingly, they have not been entirely overlooked; and, as I have already mentioned, some steps have been taken, doubtless with a view to their removal. I will at once proceed to state what these are, how far they have answered the end proposed, and are still likely to contribute to a further and effectual amelioration. As these inconveniences have originated and centre in the unfortunately existing unsettled state of language, the different measures that have been taken in order to remedy them, must naturally have reference to the same subject; but as people differ in their opinion with regard to this, so they differ likewise as to the mode of counteracting the evils proceeding from it.

It would seem, that ever since the Saracens were expelled from these islands, the common opinion entertained respecting the Maltese language has been, that it is either a corrupt jargon, through which instruction could not be conveyed to the people, or so little applicable to practical purposes, as to be unworthy and dangerous of cultivation. In consequence

of this assumed opinion, the cultivation of the Maltese language has become utterly neglected, the Arabic proscribed, and the Italian introduced. (See the Preface to Sig. Vassalli's *Maltese Lexicon*, at p. 30.)

From the above considerations it is very likely that the latter plan was pursued with a view to making the Italian the general language of the Maltese, instead of the Arabic, although the measures adopted, as experience has shewn, were by no means adequate to accomplish such an end. From the extreme difficulty of tracing any earlier state of public education at Malta, I am unable clearly to ascertain, what provisions were made, previous to the time of the Grand Master Rohan, (1775.) to spread the knowledge of the Italian language, through this medium. Judging, however, from the history of those times, it is not very probable that much had been done, by this means, previous to his government, towards the introduction of the Italian into Malta.

In Sicily, the Italian was reinstated as the general language, after the expulsion of the Saracens, chiefly by the mixing of Italian soldiers with the natives. (See Ciantar's *Malta Illustrata*, lib. II. Not. IX. p. 632.) But it would seem, that this plan was not deemed by the Sicilian Government, as expedient to its introduction among the Maltese. The principal method it appears to have pursued in this particular, was the adoption of the Italian for conducting the affairs of Government, both in the legislative and executive branches, and for some concerns of the Church. As to the rest, it seems to have been left to the judgment of the people, as subjects of Sicily, to find out their own interest with regard to the learning of this language.

A more extensive commerce, and general intercourse, was established between Malta and Italy under the Sicilian Government, which was afterwards kept up under the Government of the Knights, a great many of whom were Italians, who brought with them their families and households. A number of other Italians also resorted hither, established themselves, and intermarried with the Maltese. Amongst these, and almost all other foreigners, the Italian was chiefly adopted, as the language both of verbal and written communication, all which causes materially contributed to the extension of this language at Malta; yet, comparatively taken, very little was effected by these means towards its *general* spread. It influenced principally the upper, whilst the lower and the middle classes continued to use the Maltese as their own exclusive language. A very sensible judgment is given on this subject, in Ciantar's *Malta Illustrata*; (lib. II. Not. IX. p. 681, 682, 683.) where he adduces several reasons, why the Maltese have retained the use of the Arabic language among them.

With the Grand Master Rohan arose a new era, as to the administration of the public affairs of this island. His noble and enlightened mind rightly conceived, that, "there were two objects, which especially demanded the attention of a governor, since they, more than any thing else, contributed to render the people virtuous, and submissive to the government under which they lived. The first was public schools, in which youth might be taught to respect the laws; and the second, was a strict observance of equity in the Courts of Justice, which induces a subject to submit without repining to their rewards." (De Boisgelin, Vol. II Part. II.

p. 4.) Under his government the mode of public instruction seems to have been much improved, which may also have contributed to a better knowledge of the Italian, although the spread of that language might not have been the direct object of his endeavours. After him, very little alteration seems to have taken place in the mode of public instruction respecting language, and even since Malta has come under the English Government, the language used at the public and private schools, has been chiefly the Italian.

I will now show how far the above state of things has been attended with success. As regards the actual working of these Italian schools for the upper classes, I beg to refer to what has been stated at p. 16 in my first letter, whence it is evident, that they must come infinitely short of the object sought for in their establishment. And in order to show what little success has attended the operation of those established for the middle and lower classes, I would call your attention to the defective results of the Normal School of Valletta, chiefly maintained by Government, for the benefit of this portion of the Maltese population. As to the public school of Senglea, little can be said, it having been at work but a very limited period.

The first of these schools has been in operation for many years past; but, with regard to *mental* and moral instruction, it presents almost an entire failure. Except a very small number, who may have other means by which to learn Italian, children acquire at these schools scarcely any knowledge of that language worth mentioning, and consequently obtain hardly any useful information or moral benefit therefrom. The

results have proved equally unsatisfactory as to mental and moral instruction in other common schools: such as the Girls' school at the House of Industry, and in some little country schools, the establishing of which has been attempted from time to time in different villages, as branches of the Valletta Normal School, but which have generally dwindled away and been given up.

Whilst viewing such disappointments, we might be led to imagine, that the people either did not, or could not appreciate instruction, or that there was some fatal countercurrent which tended to impede the progress of the children, and to stunt the growth of these useful institutions. Upon farther reflection, however, we may perceive that there is no necessity for adopting either of the above conclusions, in order to account for such a phenomenon; for that the cause lies chiefly, if not entirely, in the *mode* of instruction pursued in these schools. Certainly we need not wonder, that through the long neglected education of these classes, the intellectual faculties of the children should not appear so ready for developement and improvement, as they would have been, if they had enjoyed the advantage of witnessing the beneficial effects of education in their parents, in the circle in which they are habitually moving, and in society in general. Besides, some of them might perhaps have felt a greater desire and love for learning, if their minds had been kept free from all bias inimical to education. But laying aside these considerations, there are other difficulties with which they have had to contend. I think the mode, hitherto employed in teaching the Italian at public common schools, has been so deplorably vicious, that even the

quickest and most intelligent minds could make but little progress under the system. For how is it possible to teach a foreign tongue to two or three hundred children in a school, by the viva-voce instruction of one master or mistress, without the aid of a single book in the only language intelligible to the children, to assist the interpretation of the language to be acquired! If the instruction were confined to the mere *reading* of the foreign language, as it was in the House of Industry, there would be no difficulty in the matter; but where the object is to give a knowledge of the language, so as to enable the children to speak and understand it, what a mockery is such a plan. A child, daily standing at the knees of its mother, might probably be taught a language in this way, yet what labour and time it would cost, and how imperfectly, after all, would the child be acquainted with it. But how fruitless the task, when hundreds of children are thus to be dealt with; not receiving their lessons from the anxious parent, each in its turn, but collectively in large classes, from the ordinary school instructors: first of all reading a sentence in Italian, and then listening to a viva-voce interpretation. Now this is precisely the mode in which instruction has been, and still is imparted in Malta. No wonder then, that after years have been spent at these schools, the majority of the children cannot translate a single sentence of Italian, far less speak it. If these poor children had the advantages of the upper classes, of hearing the Italian spoken at home, and in the circles of their general intercourse, even if it were not of the purest kind, there might be a chance of their learning something of it, however little that might be. But as most of the

parents and associates of these children are quite unacquainted with the Italian, some speaking it but indifferently, and scarcely any being able to write it, conversing for the most part almost exclusively in the Maltese; if children in such circumstances have to learn a foreign language upon a plan, according to which hardly any, or no reference at all is had to their own tongue, hearing for years, lesson after lesson of Italian, merely by means of the Italian, just as parrots are taught to speak, without understanding what they say; — should it be a matter of surprise, I ask, if by such a preposterous, barbarous and degrading mode of teaching, even the most intelligent children are ever able to acquire any material knowledge of the language? Moreover, the evil of such a course is not single, for besides failing in its object, it must tend to benumb their mental faculties, and by wearying the children, injure their habits of application, and render them altogether indifferent to instruction. Now all this actual and melancholy result, with regard to the education of the lower classes, is but the effect of that prejudice mentioned at the beginning of this letter, and alluded to in my first, that no use could be made of the Maltese language for practical purposes, not even as a medium for learning other languages.

But the nature of the evil of this mode of instruction, just pointed out, is nothing new; it has been perfectly well known to Government for some time past, and our late Governor, Sir Frederick C. Ponsonby, exceedingly lamented the difficulty of devising a plan to counteract so serious an inconvenience. I have reason to believe that similar feelings exist with the present Government, and from what I learn, a sort of *mezzo-termine*

plan is about to be adopted, that is, the Maltese language is to be taught and made a medium for the acquisition of foreign languages, either Italian or English, or of both; a plan, which, if well executed, will doubtless very essentially aid and facilitate the instruction of the children, and may, in other respects, conduce to their advantage.

But even supposing that the Maltese was in future to be used in the public and common schools, as a medium to acquire either the Italian or English, and supposing the attempt should prove successful, yet my objection to the plan would be substantially the same; for the fault of this mode of instruction lies, I think, in the admission it tacitly makes, and consequently in the end it proposes, that the Maltese is only useful to facilitate the acquisition of the Italian, or English,* and cannot otherwise be applied to instruction;—that the Italian must have the preeminence,—that it is the fittest language to be selected for the cultivation of the native mind,—and that, if its cultivation be steadily and extensively persevered in, it will finally accomplish what is considered by the advocates of this system a most desirable object, namely, the supplanting entirely of the Maltese language. It is chiefly with regard to this end, that I think the plan, which in other respects would be a great improvement on the old system, must always prove, not only inadequate, but also highly injurious in its operation. It undertakes a task, to which

* With regard to the question whether the preference is to be given to the Italian or to the English, in the learning of foreign languages at Malta, see the opinion given at p. 19. of my first letter. In this respect the lower classes, seem to be aware themselves of what is their duty and interest, as many of them evidently take great pains to learn the English, notwithstanding the very imperfect means they possess for its acquisition.

I know of no parallel in the history of language. That languages have undergone *great changes*, either gradually, by means of education, and by a progressive developement of a new national character; or suddenly, through some extraordinary events, by which the foundations of society have been shaken and all civil connections disjointed, so that the people's habits of thinking and speaking have been attracted or allured into a different direction;—or, that upon the downfall of nations, languages have become extinct, or ceased to exist as living languages, and *have been supplanted by others*, may be substantiated by history. The Latin, the ancient Greek and the Sanscrit, may be adduced as instances of the first case, all of which have undergone considerable change, as may be seen from the several modern languages which have been formed from them. The Coptic and the Hebrew may be referred to the latter case. But that any native language has been extirpated and supplanted by a foreign one, merely by means of a general school education, I know of no instance on record; neither do I think that by the best endeavours of this kind, such a thing will ever be accomplished at Malta. I am aware, that among some of the barbarous tribes of Africa, who, in their state of degradation speak a language scarcely human, and among some nations of Europe, where a part of the people speak a corrupt patois, efforts have been made to supplant both by introducing a cultivated language. But these efforts have not been attended with such success as to afford us all the encouragement desirable for a similar undertaking; and even if they had, the case in point would still present a different aspect. The Maltese is neither a barbarous African jargon, which exhibits

hardly any clear distinction of thoughts or words, and which those who speak it, would be extremely glad to exchange for something better; nor is it one of the European patois, which by reason of its having some affinity to the general language of the country, intended to be substituted instead of it, or by the frequent intercourse of the people who speak the patois, with those who speak the general language of the country, might possibly be exchanged for the superior language, by slow, but progressive propagation. But, it is a dialect of a well cultivated language, deeply rooted in the feelings of the people for centuries past; bearing no resemblance to any European tongue, and spoken by a people that are separated from the main land of Europe, and who have much more intercourse with the East than with the West. With regard to a language so circumstanced, the difficulties attending an exchange, must necessarily prove exceedingly great, and as to its being accomplished merely by means of a general system of school education, in my humble opinion, quite insurmountable.

As to the question then, concerning the probable effects of a general *Italian* school education and literature upon the Maltese language, the nature of the case and past experience teach us, that all we have to expect from such a measure, would be a gradual increase in the number of those who would know how to speak and to write the Italian language, more or less correctly, whilst the Maltese dialect would continue in general use, though perhaps with an increasing admixture of Italian words. The seed, thus sown, for the growth of the Italian language would certainly, as regards the country, fall as it were on a desert, where

for want of due nourishment, it must utterly fail of producing the desired fruit.

If some unforeseen circumstance should bring about a more frequent communication between Malta, Italy and Sicily, one might have a faint hope of an extensive change being gradually effected in their dialect. But, comparatively speaking, there are but few among the mass of the Maltese who ever visit these quarters, or who have any inducement so to do. On the contrary, as a great number are constantly visiting, and thousands always inhabiting for years together, countries where the Arabic is vernacular, from which intercourse one of the chief sources of support and income to this island is derived, we have good reason to think the period when such a change will come to pass, is not only far distant, but will never arrive.

Sad indeed must, therefore, be the prospect, as respects the intellectual condition of the Maltese, if their faculties are to be developed by means of the Italian language, and their general information and acquaintance with the arts and sciences made to depend on a competent knowledge of that tongue. Defective, half wrought, and erroneous ideas, expressed in an imperfect Italian, would evidently be the principal result of such a troublesome and inexpedient measure, in reference to the greater proportion of the people, and the very idea of their reaching any firmness and depth of thought, or excellence of expression, for centuries to come, must be relinquished at the very outset of the plan.

By the hitherto strange method of teaching the upper classes of the Maltese youth the sciences in the Italian language, an immense deal of original idea

and mental activity, has necessarily gone to waste, (see p. 14, 15.) and they have been thereby forcibly limited to a poor mediocrity in their learning, and debarr'd from distinguishing themselves in those branches of study, which, judging from the natural intelligence and persevering industry of the Maltese, they are as fully capable of excelling in as any other people in the world, provided their due be given them, namely, equal means of prosecuting them. But if the method of teaching in the Italian should be extended also to the lower classes, and even to the country people, who have scarcely any opportunity of speaking that language, it must prove to them much more ineffectual and defective.

Thus much with regard to the ultimate result of this mode of instruction, which comes infinitely short of what those aim at, who would adopt it.

Another means which has been employed to remove the inconveniences, existing here with regard to language, is the cultivation of the Maltese on its own ground, and for purposes of education and literature. Judging from the foregoing statement, as to the use of the Italian for these purposes in Malta, it cannot be expected that this mode could have been adopted on a very extensive scale, since the Italian was stated to have been in general use, almost to the exclusion of the Maltese. Yet it gives me pleasure to say, that although general opinion and practice has proved prejudicial to the method, it has been partially adopted.

The Grammarian and Lexicographer, Sig. Agius, was, as far as my knowledge extends, the first who earnestly betook himself to the cultivation of the Maltese

language. He was followed, a long time afterward, by the late Sig. Vassalli, a man of considerable learning and ingenuity, and who merits the greatest praise for his attention to the Maltese language. His writings have also been noticed by several oriental scholars in Europe, and particularly by the distinguished Arabic scholar, Baron de Sacy of Paris. He was appointed Professor *linguarum Orientalium* by our late Governor, and for sometime gave lectures on the Maltese language, at the University. At present, I know of no Maltese, who has bestowed any serious attention to the cultivation of his native tongue, except an old man of the name of Peppu Canolo, a knife-grinder, a man, self taught, and who, if not by the solidity, yet by the extensiveness of his oriental learning, excels almost all his countrymen.

As to the use that has been made of the Maltese, in reference to public instruction, I will first state, that, for a long time past, the people have been in the habit of learning the catechism of their church in their own dialect. They are also generally addressed and instructed, at different seasons, especially during Lent, from the pulpit, both in the town and country, in the Maltese tongue. It is true, the language used on these occasions presents often a strange mixture of several languages; yet it consists chiefly of the Maltese. The text is commonly chosen and read by the preacher from the Latin Vulgate, and citations are also made from the same; the exposition is then given, and the application made, in the Maltese language, interspersed, and now and then ornamented with Italian phrases. In the country, however, little Italian is heard on these occasions, where it sometimes happens they have very

good preachers, especially as regards purity of expression, in their own dialect. A person who often heard the late Revds. Cenaklu, Anselmu, and Sammit of Malta preach, says, in one of his letters, in my possession: "They taught and exhorted every one faithfully. They were learned men, and knew how to explain the word of God, to bring sinners to repentance and faith, and to a life devoted to God. Sacred truth fell from their mouths like sun beams, and it was well understood, though in select language, and without confusion and foreign admixture. But they did not seek the praise of men; their only aim was, to teach the word of God, and to comfort thereby Christian men."

Again, seven years ago, the Rev. J. Keeling, Wesleyan Missionary, established a school in Valletta, which contained for some time from one hundred to one hundred and thirty children, boys and girls, who were taught in their mother tongue. This school succeeded very well, for in a very short time, the children acquired the art of reading and writing their own language with ease, some knowledge of arithmetic, and other useful information. They committed large portions of Fleury's Catechism to memory, and read a few books containing much useful matter, both with understanding and pleasure. By means of the Maltese, they were thus led on to the English language, and their progress in the acquisition of it, was generally very satisfactory. It is indeed greatly to be lamented, that the removal of that gentleman, proved so very prejudicial to this promising seminary. The Maltese language has also been used in the Malta Charitable Girls' school, under the direction of English ladies; but the want of qualified Maltese teachers and of good school

books, has put a stop to this medium of instruction. I myself employed the Maltese, several years ago, when I had some Maltese youths under my care; and the ultimatum of its use was, the giving of lessons on right thinking, or on practical logic, and in perusing with them part of Euclid, when I certainly began to feel that I had to struggle with an uncultivated language. At present, I do not know whether any use is made of it in public or in private instruction, except by the Church.

As to Maltese literature, though poor, yet it is more extensive than that of the Malta-Italian, or of any other *modern Arabic dialect*. It may be divided, both as to print and manuscript, into two kinds: that which is written in the Roman, and that which is written in the Arabic character. Among the first class, we reckon, particularly, the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church, the writings of the old Maltese Grammarian and Lexicographer Agius, of Soave, Canolo, Vassalli, and Dr. Naudi. Soave wrote a useful little work on the 'Duties of man,' and a spelling-book for the school at Gozo, both of which contain many useful things. From Canolo, we have a translation of the whole of the Old Testament, Thomas à Kempis, a Maltese Grammar in manuscript, and the Gospel of St. John in print. Of Vassalli, we possess in print, a Dictionary and two Grammars, a collection of upwards of eight hundred Maltese Proverbs, a translation of the History of Cyrus, of the Four Gospels, and of the Acts of the Apostles; and, in manuscript, the rest of the New Testament, with a variety of original letters, dialogues, treatises, &c. Dr. Naudi has translated several useful things from the English: such as, part of Fleury's Catechism, part of Wesley's Notes on the New Testament,

and different religious and moral subjects, histories, tales, &c. for the Wesleyan Miss. Soc.; and which were partly used either at their school, in print, or by Mr. Keeling and Dr. Naudi, in manuscript, for preaching.

Beside these, there are a good number of words and phrases, to be found in the works of Abela and Ciantar, printed in Roman characters, as well as many manuscripts in the possession of private persons. Vella's Grammar, printed at Leghorn, is a pretty good help to the English for acquiring the Maltese; but its typography is very bad. There have likewise been published some Maltese Hymns, by the Rev. Dr. L. M. Tomassi, in the same character. A few attempts have been lately made, to write the Maltese also in Arabic letters. Sig. Bellanti has made use of this character in translating some of the Psalms, and other miscellaneous pieces, but these are not yet printed. Canolo wrote in them a Maltese Grammar, which I possess in manuscript. Dr. Gesenius of Halle, in his Treatise upon this language, wrote the Maltese in Arabic letters. De Sacy, in his Treatise on the Maltese language, published in the *Journal des Savans*, Avril 1829, did the same. On the 17th. table, annexed to the 2d Vol. of Ciantar's *Malta Illustrata*, we have a specimen of the Coophic character preserved, which, in all probability, was made use of before the Saracens were expelled from this island. There may probably exist other Maltese writings in Arabic characters, but no other have come to my knowledge.

Having such experience, together with the little company of witnesses before us, we may perhaps be permitted to say, that the Maltese language may be employed for useful purposes, such as public instruction

in common schools, and even in some degree for literature. The great advantages it presents in point of education, are chiefly its intelligibility, and adaptation to the Maltese mind. Children know thereby what they are learning, and it is congenial to their habits of thinking. It carries them gradually and easily on, and thus affords them that mental pleasure in the result of their endeavours, which is one of the first requisitions for the good working of schools. With regard to a people who have not been much accustomed to mental exertion for centuries past, it must be a special desideratum, that learning should be rendered for them as natural and easy as possible; and this is the very object which this mode would secure. For, as an Italian education would place the children, as it were, in a European hot-house, where the Oriental plants, by being unnaturally fostered and forced up, would become sickly, and never arrive at their proper growth or fruitfulness; so an education in their own language, would be placing them in a climate congenial to their mind, where, in the enjoyment of native moral health, their mental energies would be increased and strengthened, and they would thus be enabled vigorously to advance, until they reached that maturity and perfection, which by nature they are capable of attaining.

Yet, after all, this plan is not without serious difficulties and defects. And first, we would observe, that it has to contend with that inveterate prejudice, which has been infused by foreigners into the minds of a great many of the Maltese, against the use of their mother tongue for such purposes. It is a fact, that of the various printed works above enumerated,

scarcely one has had any sale, except the Church Catechism, and the Hymns of the Rev. M. Tomassi. The first must of course sell well, for its use is commanded by the Church; and it is not to be wondered at, if the latter finds many purchasers when we consider the strong recommendation it has received from the present Bishop of Malta. As to the other works, certainly no such inducements have ever been held out, which, together with the small number of readers, and the difficulty of reading the different characters, employed by the respective authors, may perhaps account in some degree for their scanty sale, so that we need not attribute it entirely to prejudice. Yet, that this lamentable evil has had something to do with it, we have too strong proof. Some time ago, much dissatisfaction was expressed by children in a charity school, because they were taught Maltese, whilst in the same school, in which, we would remark, not a word of Italian is taught, the children show every readiness for learning the English, the acquisition of which must of course be much more difficult to them.

A second difficulty lies in the *unsettled* state of the Maltese language, especially as regards its alphabet and orthography. This is particularly apparent in the variety of characters employed in writing and in printing it. When enumerating the Maltese works, extant, both in print and in MSS. I divided them into two classes: such as are written in the Roman, and such as are written in the Arabic characters; and yet the inconvenience does not lie so much in the use of these two, as in the admixture of characters used in each of them. For as people are as yet by no means agreed, which of the characters, Roman or Arabic,

should have the exclusive preference in writing the Maltese, so they have no standard with regard to either of them.

Indeed, it is a very melancholy consideration, that in an island, which in the remotest antiquity was colonized by a people, who are held as the inventors of letters; — in an island, which has preserved documents of writing for thousands of years from the Phœnicians, and of later date from the Arabs; — that at a place which has been governed for a long time by various enlightened kingdoms of Europe; the nursery of lettered Knights, the rendezvous of scientific travellers in the Levant, and now for upward of 30 years, the most important dependency of Great Britain in the Mediterranean; withal, having a learned University; — that at such a place, there should still be a question about the mode of writing the native tongue of the Maltese. Still, I regret to say, this question is not yet adjusted. The orthography of this language, whether considered in reference to the Roman or the Arabic characters, is yet, if not in a state of great confusion and barbarity, far from being settled, although men of talent and industry have very laudably exerted themselves about it, during the last and the present century.

As to the Roman characters, I beg to remark, that as they are by no means sufficient to express all the sounds contained in the Maltese language, those who adopted them, were obliged to add several new ones; and the confusion which now appears in the orthography of the Maltese in the Roman character, arises from these very additions, in the shape and number of which those who made use of this character do not agree. Their number varies from 5 to 9; and

almost every writer has taxed his ingenuity afresh to increase the confusion, by inventing a different form for them. As the best of these alphabets we consider the last one of Vassalli. Those of his letters that are new, have generally an easy shape, and while they are assimilated to the Roman character, bear a reference to the Oriental parentage of this language, which affords considerable help in tracing the etymology of words. They form also the most complete alphabet of the Maltese that we know of, offering a sign for every articulation in the language. His system of accentuation seems to us, as having been carried rather too far, sometimes approaching the pedantic; this, however, may be very easily remedied, by omitting the greater part of it.

Regarding, therefore, both the neatness and perfection of Vassalli's Alphabet, especially in connexion with the correctness and classical accuracy wherewith he applies it in his writings, it may undoubtedly be taken as a good model, and a safe guide in the writing of the Maltese, whenever people may begin to make a more regular and general use thereof, *as of a language written in Roman characters.*

De Sacy's opinion on this subject is found in the same number of the *Journal des Savans*, already alluded to, (p. 197. et seq.) which upon the whole, amounts to this, that, although he has nothing to object to Vassalli's Alphabet, and approves of his having added several new letters to that of the Roman, which he, as well as Vassalli, think insufficient of itself to express all the sounds in the Maltese, yet he would rather prefer the Arabic to the Roman character in writing this

language; though he admits, that, with regard to this plan also, there would be great difficulties.

In the few Maltese works, written in Arabic characters, we observe a considerable difference as to writing. De Sacy and Gesenius follow Arabic etymology; P. Canolo writes it as it is spoken; and Belanti follows Arabic etymology, but pays some regard also to certain peculiarities of the Maltese, in contradistinction to the pure Arabic, especially by marking with a particular sign the letter Aleph, (1) when it is pronounced like *ea* in hear.

These little differences present additional difficulties to the writing of the Maltese, in Arabic characters; neither are they so unimportant as at first sight they may perhaps appear. They involve the general question, whether, *if the Maltese be written in Arabic characters, it ought to be written as it is spoken, or rather according to the demands of its Etymology.* The right adjustment of a question like this, has always proved a difficult task to those who have engaged in the praiseworthy, but delicate and laborious undertaking of correcting, improving and settling the orthography of language. (See Dr Johnson's ideas on this subject with regard to the English language, in the Plan of his Dictionary with the Preface.) But notwithstanding the difficulty of the task, a feeling of justice and of gratitude has generally induced them to adhere, as far as practicable, to the *just demands of Etymology*; and one would fondly hope, that a similar feeling might be indulged here.

Upon due consideration, however, I have reason to fear, that to write the Maltese in Arabic characters, clear of its dialectical peculiarities, changes and cor-

ruptions, and strictly according to the rules of the Arabic Dictionary and Grammar, and yet intelligibly to the Maltese, will prove an exceedingly difficult, and almost impracticable undertaking. As to the Maltese Lexicon, it may be shewn, that at least seven-eighths of its words are distinctly traceable to Arabic etymology, many of which, however, have undergone much change both as to form and signification, in the Maltese dialect. For further proof and elucidation of this, I beg to refer to the Appendix, whence it will appear evident, that while so great a proportion of words in the Maltese may be traced to this original, yet many of them have become so far different from the form in which they appear in the classical Arabic, that to write them as they are spoken would be to cultivate barbarism, whilst scarcely any would be able to comprehend them, if written according to the strict rules of Arabic etymology, so remote must they appear from the usual mode in which they are expressed. (See also De Sacy's Treatise on the Maltese.)

Yet, notwithstanding these intrinsic obstacles, together with the difficulty of devising a middle course, for' writing the Maltese in Arabic characters, their use would be preferable to the Roman. Setting aside the existing confusion of Roman Alphabets, in which some few works in this language have been written, the inference cannot but appear just, that, if it be so difficult to preserve the etymology of the Maltese, as an Arabic dialect, by an orthography in Arabic, its preservation must be much more difficult in the Roman characters. (See for exemplification and proof of this, Sir W. Jones' Works Vol. I. p. 177.)

However, orthography in Arabic characters will not

only be more advantageous for the language, as to the preservation and improvement of its etymology, but also as to its usefulness. None but the inhabitants of these Islands will be profited by writing the Maltese in Roman, whereas, by employing the Arabic character, the Maltese dialect may gradually become very useful, in imparting and receiving through it, written communications to and from all the neighbouring countries where the Arabic is vernacular. As to the Barbary Arabic, to which the Maltese dialect is most closely related, nothing could be more easy than the establishment of a correspondence by writing, intelligible both to the Maltese, and to the Arabs of Tripoli, Tunis, Fez, Algiers and Morocco; the more so, as those people are accustomed to use the vulgar tongue for epistolary communications, although they do not employ it in works for publication. If it were only therefore on this account, every one acquainted with the position and wants of this Island, will perceive the great advantages, likely to accrue to the Maltese, from their employing Arabic characters in the writing of their language.

Besides the absence of a settled standard Alphabet to be employed in writing Maltese, occasioning such a conflict of opinion, we might notice the petty differences which arise from the introduction into that language of foreign, chiefly Italian words. This, however, would seem to depend mainly upon the taste and knowledge of those who use them. And if the language was rich enough to afford always the proper words, their use would probably soon be discontinued. However, as the words thus used, have always to yield in their forms to the rules of the Arabic

grammar, they add to its utility, while they do not materially disfigure the language.

This remark naturally leads me to another difficulty, with regard to the cultivation of the Maltese, and its use for education and literature, viz. the *poverty* of the language. For let it not be presumed, that because we have endeavoured to show that so much has already been done in the Maltese, it would not fail, if the demands which a thorough education, and the cultivation of an erudite literature were made upon it. For although nothing approaching this has yet been attempted, we find that even the best writers in the Maltese, have been forced from the deficiencies of the language, to introduce foreign words, when they have wished to express any complex and metaphysical ideas, technical or scientific terms, or such as may not be in common use among the people. That this must necessarily be the case, will be evident from the consideration, that so many centuries have elapsed, since any system of education has been carried on in the mother tongue of the Maltese, or any attempts been made to improve the dialect, by borrowing from its original such terms, as might be necessary to supply its deficiencies, for the purposes of general literature.

How small is the compass of this dialect, how inadequate is it from its limited vocabulary, to treat of, and accurately to explain, even but one whole science, far less the number of sciences which form the literary pursuits of our days! And, as to the full development and cultivation of the human intellect, the principal consideration in education, how troublesome and difficult would be the task, to cause the enlightening beams of science to penetrate the chaos of notions, in

which the minds of the greater part of the people still lie buried, by means of this rude, and comparatively speaking, corrupt tongue. But, it may perhaps be said, that the chief question here does not refer to the *higher* branches of education, nor to *polite* and *refined* literature, but to common schools, and to such writing as may suit a people just emerging into the idea of getting a literature. This we admit; but our view is not so limited, it looks farther, and embraces both education and literature as a whole. We believe that *common* schools, well taught, form the basis of a good national education. But as no architect would rest satisfied by having merely laid a good foundation for a building, so no one who has the whole structure of the intellectual welfare of a people at heart, will be satisfied by having merely established such schools. On the other hand, as it would be wrong in an architect, to bestow his labour on the higher and more ornamental parts of a building, before he had laid its foundation, so it would be wrong in us to pay our *first* regard to *upper* schools, and the sciences, without having made due provision for common schools. Yet the cultivation of the sciences and erudite literature is a very important object, forming as it were, the *top-stone* in a plan of general education; and without a proper attention to this, even that part of the plan which refers to common schools, must work badly and remain imperfect.

For instance, it were in vain to think of setting up schools without teachers. But the office of the master, even of a common school, is no easy task; not every one is competent for it. Besides other qualifications, the person who undertakes such an office,

ought to possess much general information, a good knowledge of Arithmetic, sacred and profane History, Geography, Geometry, Mathematics, and Pedagogy. But to become duly acquainted with these subjects, he will need books, and directions how to study them. And thus we see, that the cultivation of sciences, and some kind of superior education, are required even for the sake of common schools. We are aware, that some men are apt to question the necessity of such great qualifications, in the masters of common schools, and would be satisfied if they were capable of reading and writing, and had some little knowledge of arithmetic. But such sentiments deserve little or no consideration, they betray an ignorance of the nature of a good school, of the subjects, necessary in our days, to be taught therein, of the art of teaching, and partly also, of the object of education. On the continent, where the art of school-keeping has attained great perfection, and even in Greece, school-masters are regularly and carefully educated for their office; and the grateful fruit which their labours produce, is the best recommendation of the measure. (See also first Annual Report of the Home and Colonial Infant-School Society, 1837 page 5.)

From what we have said upon this subject, it is quite obvious, that, whether we regard it only in reference to common schools, or conjointly with the cultivation of literature and the sciences, the Maltese dialect, in its present state, appears inadequate for these purposes.

The last difficulty we would notice, regarding the cultivation of the Maltese on its own ground, for the general purposes of education and literature, is, that it

is an Arabic dialect, spoken only by the inhabitants of two small islands. As a dialect of the Arabic, the Maltese may be considered almost as good as any other. If part of its words are European, chiefly Italian, other Arabic dialects employ many words, either of the *lingua Franca*, or of the Turkish. (See De Sacy's *Chrestomathie Arabe*, Tom. III. p. 273—386; the Arabic articles in the *Moniteur Algerien* ورقة خبر الجزائر and Perceval's Preface to his Arabic Grammar, p. 1.) If the grammatical form of the Arabic etymon in the Maltese dialect differs from the etymon of the literal Arabic more in one part of speech, it differs in other dialects more in another. (See the Appendix.) And, if with regard to their syntax nothing can be said, but that it follows the literal Arabic, more or less correctly, according to the ability and knowledge of the writer, the same may be said of the Maltese. (See Perceval's Grammar, p. 84.)

On all these accounts, we are led to think, that the Maltese stands nearly, perhaps entirely, in the same relation to the literal Arabic, as the vulgar Arabic generally does. The difference, indeed, of the several modern Arabic dialects, the Maltese included, is generally very slight. Lane, in his account of the manners and customs of the modern Egyptians, Vol. I. p. 263, says, in reference to this subject: "Nor is there so great a difference between the dialects of Arabic, spoken in different countries, as some persons, who have not held intercourse with the inhabitants of such countries, have imagined: they resemble each other more than the dialect of some of the different counties of England." Lane differs herein entirely from Niebuhr, who finds the difference as great as that between the Provençal, the

Spanish, the Portuguese, &c. But it must be remembered, that Niebuhr advances his opinion, not as an Arabic scholar, but as a scientific traveller, upon what he learned through different interpreters, in Arabia and Egypt; (*Description de l'Arabie*, p. 74 anno 1724.) whilst Lane, during a long residence in Egypt, himself acquired a perfect knowledge of what he communicates.

With regard to the difference between the vulgar and the literal Arabic, people have also advanced various opinions, widely differing from each other. Clodius, in his *Arabic Grammar* p. 29 has observed: "*Dialectus Arabum vulgaris tantum differt ab erudita, quantum Isocrates dictio ab hodierna lingua Græca.*" "The vulgar Arabic differs as much from the literal, as the style of Isocrates from the Modern Greek." Niebuhr, in his *Description de l'Arabie*, 1726. Vol. II. p. 74 says: "*L' on peut donc dire, que l' ancienne langue Arabe est en Orient, ce qu' est le Latin en Europe.*" "One may therefore say, that the ancient Arabic language is in the East what the Latin is in Europe." Herbin, in the preface to his grammar, thinks that the modern Arabic differs much from the ancient Arabic. On the contrary, Höchst, (*Nachrichten Von Marokos and Fez*. p. 217.) says: that the difference between the vulgar and the literal Arabic is not so great as people commonly think. In an Arabic dialogue, printed by Prof. Jahn of Vienna, in his *Arabic Chrestomathy* p. 224, a European visitor mentions, that he had heard from a Moslem sheikh, that the difference of the literal and the vulgar Arabic was as great as that of the ancient and modern Greek; to which a learned Arab replies, that the ancient and the present vulgar Arabic

form one language; ولا فرق ما بينهما البتة 'and that there is no difference between them at all.' Lane's opinion, as given in his late work, Vol. I. p. 263, which we consider the nearest to correctness, is, that there is not so much difference between the *literal* and *popular* dialects of the Arabic, as some European Orientalists have supposed. The latter may be described as a literal dialect simplified, principally by the omission of the final vowels and other terminations, which distinguish the different cases of nouns, and some of the persons of the verbs."

It is rather extraordinary, that in countries where education and the cultivation of sciences have, for some time past, been at such a low ebb, ancient classical language has been preserved so well. But, if we consider the singular beautiful form of the Arabic etymon, in all the different parts of speech; its straight forward and easy construction into sentences; its just reluctance to accommodate itself to new forms; the abundance of synonymical and metaphorical expressions in the ancient Arabic, especially in proverbs and poetry, handed down in their original forms from generation to generation, together with the aversion to change, so natural to all Oriental nations; their high esteem for tradition, and the great love, particularly of the Arabs, for eloquence, which induced them to study Grammar, Rhetoric and Poetry, even to the neglect of other sciences; and finally, the fact, that as to Muhammedan countries, the language of Religion, and of the laws, has been that of the literal Arabic, (See Höchst's Marokos, p. 218.) we may perhaps herein find some good reason, explanatory of this phenomenon.

Now it is on account of this close relation of the diffe-

rent modern Arabic dialects to each other, as well as their mutual affinity to the literary Arabic, that we conceive the chief reason, why no use has been made of them for education or writing, except correspondence. Indeed, if their respective differences were as great as those between the French and Italian, the Spanish and the Portuguese, or the modern and the ancient Greek language, then I have no doubt we should find in those countries, in which the Arabic is vernacular, numbers of books written, as well as education imparted therein; but closely related as these dialects are to each other, and respectively again to the literary Arabic, the establishing of a literature, independent of the classical Arabic, as it must have appeared an unnecessary, so it would have been, comparatively, a useless undertaking. Nor is there any thing uncommon in this reasoning; it is in fact the result of observation, with regard to the customs of other countries also. In different quarters of Europe, where parts of the population speak dialects, more or less differing from the general language, endeavours are made to bring that language, if possible, within the reach of each of the inhabitants. And there is wisdom in this plan; it has a tendency to facilitate the general intercourse of the people, to conciliate their feelings, to unite their efforts, and to advance the common interest. It is true, the Maltese do not stand exactly in the same relation with other Arabic countries, as the people to whom we have just alluded, stand to their own nation; yet the Maltese certainly have frequent intercourse with them, and, as we shall presently see, in the third letter, it is their interest that such intercourse should be facilitated in every way, and that they should be

put into the most advantageous position to profit by it. But, by cultivating their language on its own ground, independent of the literal Arabic, they would only obtain partial and unimportant benefit; they would thus pursue a singular course, unusual to the Arabs generally, and which would eventually tend to produce an estrangement between them. Beside, it must be borne in mind, that the Maltese are but a small nation. Were they ten times larger, the question would materially differ. The practical use of the cultivation of the Maltese language might then be considered more in reference to the Maltese people, whilst now it ought to be considered more as to the use it may afford them in regard to other Arabic countries. Therefore, the most expedient and advantageous way would be for the Maltese, to follow in this particular, and if possible, to improve upon the mode of proceeding in other Arabic countries, by using for the purposes of education and literature, not their own dialect, but the literary Arabic.

This naturally brings me to the consideration of the last mode adopted to obviate the inconveniences arising here from the state of language, viz. the cultivation of the literal Arabic itself. Here, I do not mean the Arabic professorship at the Government University; for by this it is not intended to impart instruction by means of the Arabic, but only to teach Arabic as it were a foreign language, and, strange enough, by means of a foreign language! In this way the Arabic forms one of the branches of polite literature, which is also cultivated, only in a more natural way, at every university in Europe, and where it generally meets with more encouragement, than has hitherto been given to it at Malta. But I say this, with reference to the school at the village

of Zeitun, for a considerable time under the direction of the Rev. Don Luigi Cammilleri, in which a small number of boys were instructed in the literal Arabic. I really do not know from whom the idea originated, to make use of the literal Arabic for such purposes at Malta, but it is, no doubt, the only correct idea. As the literary language of our dialect, it has a natural right to claim such a use, and has in its favour the use which all civilized nations make of this part of their languages. I know not, whether the school above mentioned be still existing or not, but some time ago I visited it, and upon examining some of the boys, who to my great delight were studying the Psalms in Arabic, I found that their reading was very correct, and that they understood a good deal of it; a result this, which, considering the want of a good teacher, of appropriate school-books, and other things indispensable to the efficient working of a school, was very satisfactory to witness: and, I have no hesitation in saying, that if that school had been conducted under more favourable circumstances, it would have proved, long since, one of the most effective and useful institutions ever established on this island. Yet, even supposing it had worked well, how inadequate must one single school of thirty or forty boys appear, for the intellectual wants of 120,000 people!

The plan for effectually removing the many and serious inconveniencies, which exist and have existed at Malta for a long time, on account of the state of language, as it would seem to require a *gradual total change* of the *whole system of education*, so it requires a *universal application*, and a *faithful execution*. And the plan for securing so desirable an end, I intend to discuss in my next letter.

THIRD LETTER.



Having considered the various inconveniences and evils, arising to the Maltese, from the present state of their language, as well as the inadequacy of the modes hitherto employed for removing them, I now, in conclusion, proceed to mention those means, by the adoption of which, I think the existing evils may not only be remedied, but also great advantages obtained. It is simply this: gradually to introduce, and eventually to use, the literal Arabic, for the purposes of education and of literature; to bring the advantages of such an education within the reach of every child, that is capable of profiting by it; and to treat all other languages, according to their nature, as foreign, giving, however, to the English, as its due, the preference, by making provision for its study in every public school, and by encouraging its general use.

In this case, by using the literal Arabic, the Maltese will have the advantage of a highly cultivated language, and will not be in want either of common words, or scientific terms. Sir William Jones says: "As it is unquestionably one of the most ancient (languages) of the world, so it yields to none ever spoken by mortals in the number of its words, and the precision of its phrases." (His works, Vol. I. p. 39.) Thousands of intellects have been advantageously developed therein, and hundreds of thousands of clear, useful, great,

majestic thoughts have flowed through this healthy channel, in correct and graceful style, to revive and enlighten Europe during the middle ages. As the literal Arabic has been successfully tried in a variety of extensive and valuable translations, as well as in many original works, we have already prepared to hand a collection of literature and science of easy access to the Maltese, and fitted at once for the purposes of education. And though the baneful influence of Mahammed's heresy, has greatly cramped the literary energies of the Arab's mind, and almost entirely dried up the once powerful streams of the original poetry of the Arabian peninsula, yet monuments of the earnest and extensive cultivation of this language of former days, are still preserved in the literal Arabic, and are stretched out to our view, over the finest and most interesting countries of the East, like a vast ocean of intellectual resources, for the cultivation of the human mind, the advancement of science, and the facilitation both of the literal and verbal intercourse of millions of our race. The literal Arabic language has a high philosophical character, and well used, its influence on the mind of the student or possessor must be of an improving nature. For instance, the being made acquainted with the gradual growth of the Arabic etymon, the springing up of its single root into a stem, from which proceed a number of branches, till at length it spreads itself into a rich foliage, embracing all the different parts of speech, cannot fail to expand the mind. The richness and variety of its synonyms, creating and elucidating, as they do, the very finest shades of ideas, easily and pleasantly, seem to be calculated to sharpen the intellect. And finally, the variety, the symmetry and

beauty of its grammatical forms, with their distinct significations, (respecting which that great patron of Oriental learning, Bishop Walton, says, "Its phrases and forms so excel in beauty and elegance, that the beauties of the Latin and Greek are deformities in comparison with them,") have a tendency to improve the mental faculties, to exercise the memory, to gratify the fancy, to refine the taste, to form and enrich the understanding, and habituate the mind to such industry and attention, as will prepare it not only for intellectual engagements, and studious habits, but also for the arduous duties and complex circumstances of after life. These things, together with its logical structure and refined style, which form a striking contrast, not only to the Maltese dialect, but also to most of the modern European languages, as to their meagre grammatical forms, and their often careless and loose construction, seem to claim particular notice in the consideration of the usefulness of the literal Arabic for the cultivation of the human mind, and for scientific purposes.

However, it is not only the character and construction of language, which comes into consideration, but also its *literature*. The immense mass of the literary productions of the classical Arabic, now beyond the reach of the Maltese, would become accessible to them by their making a general use of that language. And first of all, there would rise to the view, the clear and powerful streams of genuine Arabic poetry, pouring into this rocky island, and awakening among us the muses from their long night of sleep, thus reviving the dormant energies of the poetical genius of the people. This source of mental cultivation, refinement and plea-

sure, the native soil, as it were, and very essence of the activity of the Arab's mind, must remain shut up from this island, so long as the people continue to neglect the cultivation of the literal Arabic. Any one who knows how much Arabic Poetry and Grammar are dependent upon each other, will at once perceive the pertinency of these remarks. Grammars, and treatises on Grammar, and works on Rhetoric and Logic, of the first merit, abound in the literal Arabic, perhaps more than in any other language.

Again, the literal Arabic contains also a number of works on Metaphysics, on Natural and Human Philosophy, both original productions, and translations from the Greek and the Sanscrit. Part of this kind of literature may be employed immediately, part may be improved upon by European literature, and thus be prepared for use; and part may perhaps be used even for enlarging the synthesis of the present European philosophy. In Geometry and the Mathematics, there are extant likewise a vast variety of works in the literal Arabic. The classical Arabic furnishes also a rich store of works on History, Geography and Natural History, which will be particularly valuable and interesting to the Maltese. Not indeed as if these works were superior in their general merits to those of Europe on the same subjects; but they chiefly refer to the East, and will therefore materially assist the Maltese in extending and improving their knowledge of the character, the manners and customs of Eastern nations, especially those around them, and of the Eastern Zoology, Botany, Mineralogy, and other parts of Natural history. School books, treating on these subjects, in a popular way, especially extracted from Arabic

authors, may become exceedingly useful to the Maltese.

Again, a cultivation of the literal Arabic would open to us great advantages, when considered in regard to its relation with other Oriental languages. Schultens (*Opera Minora*, p. 490) puts the whole group of Semitic languages, the Chaldaic, the Syriac, the Ethiopic, the Hebrew, and the Arabic, together, as only so many dialects of one language, just as the Doric, the Æolic, the Ionic, and the Attic, constitute but one Greek language. (See also Sir W. Jones' works, Vol. II. p. 132.) To these we may further add the Persian and the Turkish; for although these two languages differ materially from the Arabic in their grammatical forms and construction, yet they are so replete with Arabic words, and phrases of the most elegant kind, as to make the knowledge of the classical Arabic the very primary desideratum toward their acquisition.

As to the Persian, Sir. W. Jones, speaking of this language, says: (Vol. I. p. 131.) "But if he desires to distinguish himself as an eminent translator, and to understand not only the general purport of a composition, but even the graces and ornaments of it, he must necessarily learn the Arabic tongue, which is blended with the Persian in so singular a manner, that one period often contains both languages wholly distinct from each other in expression and idiom, but perfectly united in sense and construction." With regard to its connection with the Turkish, Mons. P. A. Jaubert, (*Elémens de la Grammaire Turke*, p. 1, 2.) says: "En effet, c' est des Arabes que les Turks ont emprunté leurs caractères de l' écriture, leur système de numération,

tous les mots qui expriment des idées morales ou religieuses, et tous ceux qui sont relatifs aux sciences, aux lettres, et aux arts, nomenclature très-étendue." (See also David's preface to his Turkish Grammar.)

The easy access to other Oriental languages, attainable by the cultivation of the literal Arabic, we deem highly advantageous to the Maltese, not only on account of Philology, but also on account of the Sciences generally. The present state of the greater part of the East, as well as of Eastern history, back to the remotest days of antiquity, are hereby thrown open to their view, and the best means are thus afforded them for obtaining genuine and comprehensive information, as to the history, the manners and customs, arts and sciences of some of the most interesting nations of the East, amongst whom are found their neighbours and kinsmen.

How highly Oriental literature is prized in our days in England, may be seen from the Report of the proceedings of the second general meeting of the subscribers of the Oriental translation fund, 1829; a short extract from which I beg to insert.

"The advantages likely to be derived from a more extensive cultivation of Oriental literature in this country, may be considered as applicable to Biblical Criticism, Ecclesiastical and General History, Biography, Belles-Lettres, the Arts and Sciences, and Geography.

"With reference to Biblical Criticism and Ecclesiastical History, we know that the Sacred Scriptures, particularly those of the Old Testament, abound in modes of expression, and allusions to customs, in many cases imperfectly understood in Europe, but still prevailing in the East. That light confessedly derived

from the Arabic and other sister dialects of the Hebrew, has been thrown on the text of Scripture, by the Rabbinical and other commentators, few will deny; yet volumes on Arabic Grammar, Rhetoric, and the more ancient productions of the Arabian poets, which approach most nearly in style and sentiments to some parts of the Hebrew Bible, still lie in MS. in our libraries, either entirely neglected, or at best accessible to few.

“In the Syriac language, which approximates still nearer than the Arabic to the Hebrew in its form and modes of expression, there are in our libraries unpublished Grammars and Dictionaries, and the Commentaries on the Scriptures, written by the Bishops and other learned members of the Oriental Churches, together with MS. works of the greatest value to Divines, on Ecclesiastical History and Divinity, composed by the Fathers of the Syrian and Arabian churches. The collection also of the late Mr. Rich, now placed in the British Museum by the liberality of Parliament, contains perhaps the most valuable MSS. of the Syriac Scriptures now in existence; and it is of the greatest importance to Biblical criticism that a collation of them should be made and published.

“Perhaps no people possess more extensive stores of History, Biography, and Polite Literature, than the Arabs and Persians. The accounts which their historical and biographical works contain of their own and the surrounding countries, are necessarily the principal sources from which information can be obtained relative to the history of those regions, and of the extraordinary persons to whom they have given birth. Their histories of the Crusades in particular, which furnish

the most authentic details on this interesting subject, will always amuse and instruct the general reader, while they furnish materials of the greatest importance to the historian. In Polite Literature, and especially in works of fiction, they have perhaps never been excelled, and in studying such of their works in Belles-Lettres as have been already printed in any European language, regret must be felt that but few of these books, which are so well calculated to afford us pleasure, have been translated.

“Whatever may be our present superiority over Asia in the arts and sciences, it cannot be uninteresting to the inquiring mind to recur to the sources, from which we derived the first elements of our knowledge. In this respect Asia must be recognized as the elder sister and instructress of Europe; and although the hordes of barbarians, which poured forth like a torrent from her north-western regions, effectually extinguished the light which she at first imparted, yet we are indebted to the Mohammedan courts of Cordova, Grenada, and Seville, for its restoration, as it is to them that Europe owes the rudiments of many of her now highly cultivated arts and sciences.

“From Asiatic works on the Mathematics and Medicine perhaps much light is not now to be expected. To trace the progress of these sciences, however, under the Caliphât, when science had declined among the Greeks, cannot be uninteresting to the philosopher; and as many of the most celebrated of the Greek authors were translated into Arabic, under the patronage of the court of Bagdad, it is not improbable that some long lost Greek works may be discovered in an Arabian dress, as was the case with the

treatise on Conic sections by Apollonius Pergæus, brought to Europe by Golius, and translated by Halley.

“From the mercantile pursuits of the Arabs, foreign countries were explored, and commercial establishments formed by them, at an early period of their history; and it is anticipated that accounts of their travels may be discovered, not less interesting than those of Ibn Batuta, which have been published by the Oriental Translation Committee, or of the two Mohammedans who visited India and China in the ninth century, which were translated and published by the learned Renaudot.”

But, if the use of the literal Arabic would thus prove highly advantageous to the Maltese for the general purposes of education and literature, every other concern which vitally affects the welfare of a people, will of course be benefited thereby. As to the important object of moral and religious instruction, we have already observed, that the Church very wisely makes use of the Maltese language, at least to some extent, in her ministrations. But in so doing, she has necessarily to contend with many difficulties on account of its uncultivated character. (See Preface to Vassalli's Dictionary, p. 23.) These obstacles would not exist, if the literal Arabic was substituted for such purposes, since it is not only a well cultivated language in general, but is replete with works which treat on religious subjects. It contains also many valuable productions on the Christian faith and morals, which the Maltese might be made capable of understanding with a very little effort of mind. The best executed works on these subjects, in point of language, and the most eloquent preachers among Christians

who speak the Arabic, are those of the Greek Roman catholics, and of the Maronites of Syria; both branches of the same church with the Maltese. And had the Arabic hitherto been made the basis of all instruction at Malta, as it has been with them, there is not the least doubt, but that that language would have been preached in her churches, in accents as graceful and elegant as ever dropped from the lips of the most eloquent of Eastern orators, be listened to by multitudes with mute attention and delight, and greatly promote the edification of the Church.

Again, a general cultivation of the Arabic would be of great importance with regard to the Civil Code of the Maltese. The very characteristic which the nature of the laws, and a right interpretation of them would seem to require, is found in the Arabic language, which, as Sir Wm. Jones justly says, yields to no other in the *precision of its phrases*." Mr. Fresnel, after lamenting the decay of Arabic literature in Turkey, says: "Mais tout dégradés qu'ils sont, (viz. the present Arab Sheikhs) ils peuvent encore nous donner la clef d'une multitude de difficultés qui n'en sont pas pour eux. Par exemple, quoiqu'ils ne connaissent ni leur propre histoire, ni leur propre littérature ils savent bien la valeur des *termes techniques*, employés dans leurs écoles, ils savent bien leur droit canonique, civil, politique, &c. c'est précisément ce que nous savons le moins." (Lettres sur l'histoire des Arabes, pp. 7.) However, as the Maltese have been accustomed for a long time to have their legal transactions recorded in a foreign language, (although this is not exactly according to what it should be; See Statute 4 Geo. II. c. 26.) I would not advocate here

that such documents be drawn up in the Arabic. These, in my humble opinion, might be executed in the language, commonly used in the proceedings of the executive branch of Government; a measure this, which would bring more unity of effort into the administration of Government affairs generally, and lead to more universal satisfaction than the use of the Italian; a language, foreign both to the crown, and to the far greater portion of its Maltese subjects.* But the great usefulness which a knowledge of the literal Arabic might be in this respect to the Maltese, would be in the translation and interpretation of those written documents, in which the laws are deposited, contracts drawn up, Government proclamations made, and every necessary information given, concerning the civil and political state of the people. Indeed, I feel quite persuaded, that if gentlemen of the legal profession at Malta, were duly acquainted with the nature of the literal Arabic, their easy access to it, and the great assistance which they might derive from its use, they would not only deem its acquisition as one of great advantage to themselves, but also feel, that its general cultivation among their countrymen, would be one of the greatest national benefits that could possibly be bestowed on this island.

Another consideration of considerable importance, connected with this subject, is the Press. It must be obvious, to any who will duly reflect upon the present state of this island, that should the liberty of the press be given to her people, the operations of that powerful engine for the spread of useful knowledge, must be

* See on this subject Sir J. Stoddart's able speech, delivered on the 16th. of January, 1832, p. 66.

extremely limited, if confined to Malta. The individual or individuals, who might undertake the establishment of presses, would have almost necessarily to look abroad, in order to find an adequate demand for their publications, even to defray their expenses; and their first glance would perhaps fall upon Italy, as a fit country for the importation of such productions. But, however much I might in this case wish for a happy moral realization of the Latin eulogium, "*fertilis est Melita*," I am afraid, lest any hopes resting on such a prospect, should eventually prove to have been built upon the sand, and end in sad disappointment. If there is a person in Malta, who is acquainted with the many and almost insuperable difficulties, which obstruct the introduction of any kind of literary productions into Italy, it is myself. Ever since my coming to Malta, I have endeavoured in various ways to have books forwarded to Italy, in diverse languages, and of different contents; and my melancholy experience leads me to conclude, that Italy is shut up to Malta as to the introduction of such publications. If the experiment be attempted by others, I heartily wish they may be more successful than I have been, but judging from personal experience, I do not think they have a fair prospect of doing so, unless it be by way of smuggling.

The aspect of things, however, is very different, if we turn to the East. Turkey, Syria, Egypt, Persia and the Barbary States are all open and of easy access to us; and although the populations of these countries cannot be called, generally, a reading people, yet modern education, and the presses at Constantinople, Smyrna, Beyroot, Boulak, Algiers and Malta, have

created within the last fifteen years, a great number of readers, and excited a very extensive thirst for European knowledge. By periodicals in the Arabic, Persian and Turkish languages, the press at Malta might spread a vast deal of useful information, and advance the interests of humanity at large, as well as those of Great Britain, and of this island in particular. The present line of steam communication in the Mediterranean, seems happily adapted for the expeditious transmittal of such papers. The different British political Agents, Ministers, Consuls and Merchants residing in those countries, would in all probability, be very ready to receive such publications and to facilitate their circulation; and, it is not unlikely, that an undertaking of this kind might obtain, if solicited, a high patronage and support even in England. Such a work would require a person not only well acquainted with Oriental, but, to some extent also, with Occidental languages, as well as with the Statistics of the Levantine countries, so that he may be able to keep up a correspondence both with the East and the West, and to make use of several Oriental languages, such as the Arabic, the Turkish and the Persian, for the good conducting of such publications. Much more might be said on this subject, but I would think, that the suggestion here offered, may suffice to show, that the cultivation of the literal Arabic in Malta, may be considered in reference to the press, as a very useful and important object.

The connection of the foregoing with my general question, leads me naturally to offer now a few remarks, in order to point out the most practical bearings which the plan I am advocating presents, in reference to

the transactions of commerce, relations of diplomacy, and other important interests, and I especially beg your attention to them, in as much as they appear to me to exhibit the strongest possible recommendation for its adoption.

We have already observed, that a great many of the Maltese are in the habit of visiting and residing in countries where the Arabic is vernacular, particularly the Barbary States, Egypt and Syria. One of the reasons for this is, that, the readiness with which the Maltese accustoms himself to the speaking of other Arabic dialects, facilitates his intercourse with the inhabitants of those countries, and opens to his industry a sphere of peculiar usefulness. But of the great number who avail themselves of this advantage how few possess that qualification, which more than any other, would enable them to enter the new country, under the most favourable circumstances, and with almost a certainty of thriving. The disqualification to which I allude is, I need scarcely say, a total want of education. They set out to these countries, just knowing so much of a corrupt Arabic as may introduce them to their neighbours in the character of poor strangers, and fit them for the humblest occupations; but from not having a general knowledge of the language, and not knowing how to read and write, they cannot aspire to the higher class of situations. If the number of these emigrants was small, this inconvenience would not signify, as it would not exceed the demand for mere labourers; but the reverse being the case, there is generally an excess of applicants for labour who can find no work, and the people comprising this overplus, are unable from the deficiencies of

education, to avail themselves of other sources of usefulness. The consequence of all this is, that many of these people are continually being reduced to a most distressing state of want, and seeking relief in vain, return to their own country, dispirited and wretched, in a far worse condition than they went. Some, for a time, do not despair, but in the meanwhile they live in idleness, and are more or less a burden to their industrious and employed fellow countrymen, they contract bad habits from having little or nothing to do, and at last, when the hopelessness of employment comes upon them, and the want of the means of subsistence presses more severely, they are driven to the commission of crimes, which brand them for life as unworthy of the trust and the good opinion of their fellow creatures. I believe I am right when I state, that by far the larger portion of those who return to their native country are either worthless outcasts, or honest characters, though still suffering from extreme poverty thro' want of employment. But let us only suppose that the Maltese go to these countries under different circumstances; that they proceeded thither after having received a common school education in Arabic, so as to know at least how to read and write the literal Arabic with understanding, with some knowledge of Arithmetic, Geography and History; (the latter branches with special reference to the countries in the Levant) how different would then be the situation of many of them. Their acquired knowledge of the literal Arabic would render them welcome to the inhabitants of those countries, and meeting their favour and esteem on these grounds, a friendly intercourse would be sooner effected, and their general knowledge would qualify them

for undertakings and engagements of various kinds, to which, in their present state, they are wholly inadequate. Thus they would easily acquire some influence in society, and in a short time many of them might find themselves in a more comfortable and prosperous condition. And even in the event of occasional reverses and disappointments, by having their mind stored with more general and useful knowledge, and their judgment better informed, they would be doubtless possessed of more moral strength, enabling them to bear their own misfortune, to make their way through such difficulties as may befall them, and to extricate themselves in an honorable manner. There is nothing extravagant in this reasoning. The force of a sound education on the mind speaks for itself; and every one who knows, how much a knowledge of the literal Arabic is esteemed in Mahomedan countries, and how easily a person may be introduced thereby into respectable society and useful activity, will at once perceive the pertinence of the inferences which I have ventured to adduce respecting this subject. Moreover, if the Maltese were a people educated in the Arabic language, a lively correspondence between those resorting to Arabic countries and those remaining at home, might easily be established, which, whilst it would keep them on the one hand firmly linked to each other, would, on the other, reconcile them to their separated residences, and thus lead to fixed and permanent settlements. By such kind of emigration, which the overplus population of Malta renders very desirable, and for which their language, abilities, disposition, and industrious habits, together with the situation of their island, seem particularly to fit them, a line of commercial

enterprise for Malta would be naturally extended, which might in many respects prove very advantageous to the interests of its population; a benefit which cannot be secured through the Italian language.

And this leads me to speak of another important point, the advantage which would probably result to the Commerce of Malta by a due attention being paid to the cultivation of the Arabic. I am aware, that some feel disposed to advocate the use of the Italian on account of commercial purposes in general. It is said; that the Italian is the language of commerce in the Levant, and that whithersoever Maltese vessels go in the Mediterranean, the Italian is to them of the greatest use. Now, this argument seems to carry some weight with it; for it cannot be denied, that from the once flourishing trade of Venice and Italy, the Italian became, to a very great extent, the commercial language of the Levant, and we are well aware, that even now it maintains a certain superiority, though far less than in former times. The French is at present in a great measure the current language in several quarters, both Eastward and Westward; a circumstance which compels me to remark, that had the English and Americans, who, as to language, may be regarded as one nation, exhibited as much zeal for the propagation of their language amongst foreigners, as the French have done for theirs, judging from the great number of English and American residents, travellers, factories, mercantile establishments and connexions in the Mediterranean, the English might, by this time, have become more prevalent in these countries than any European language. But even if the Italian should continue to retain a standing here as a mercantile language, its study will

only concern such youths, as in after life are destined for the mercantile line, in the capacity of Merchants, Dealers, Clerks, Captains, Mates &c, whilst the great mass of the people will not be interested in it. These comparatively few persons may study this language, as they have hitherto done, in upper schools. On the other hand, a question yet remains, whether a knowledge of the Arabic may not be quite as useful to the Maltese for mercantile purposes, and perhaps more so, than a knowledge of any European language. The commerce between Malta and those countries where the Arabic is vernacular, that is, the Barbary States, Egypt, Syria, and other parts of the Turkish Empire, is perhaps already not of less importance than that of Italy. And is it not probable, that great encouragement might be given to trade with those countries, if we were enabled to correspond properly with the native merchants in their own language, and if ours could employ agents, well acquainted with that language, to further their interests? The same argument also applies to Turkey and Persia, the chief languages of which may be easily acquired by a good knowledge of the literal Arabic, as has been already shewn. We have been repeatedly requested to translate Arabic and Turkish letters, and various written documents, for want of other persons qualified for that task. What a reflection this upon a place like Malta, inhabited as it is by an Arabic population, and surrounded by Arabic and Turkish countries! What a baneful effect must such a state of things produce in regard to commercial enterprise! I shall just close this remark on commerce with a passage from Volney, who in regard to the use of the vernacular languages of these countries, says: "Supposons l'usage

de ces langues familier à nos facteurs, et tous le commerce change de face : les marchands se mêlent, les colporteurs pénètrent jusque dans les villages, les marchandises se distribuent, la circulation s'anime, l'industrie s'éveille, les esprits s'électrisent, les idées se répandent ; et bientôt, par ce contact général, s'établit entre l'Asie et l'Europe une affinité morale, une communication d'usages, de besoins, d'opinions, de mœurs, et enfin de lois, qui de l'Europe jadis divisée ont fait une espèce de grande republique, d'un caractère uniforme, ou du moins ressemblant." (See also the remark of Höst on this subject, *Nachrichten von Marokos*, p. 232.)

Again, the cultivation of the Arabic will be highly useful to the Maltese for the purposes of interpretation and translation. How suitable and acceptable would the Maltese be as interpreters to English travellers proceeding to the East, to the English fleet, to Embassies, Expeditions, &c, if they were well educated, and in possession of the Eastern languages. The number of travellers to the Levant increases every year, and increasing interest is excited with regard to the history, condition and destiny of the Levantine countries. But how difficult is it, as yet, to proceed successfully in those regions, unless aided by a good knowledge of Eastern languages, or provided with faithful guides or interpreters. A want of these frequently brings travellers into uncomfortable, perplexing, and dangerous circumstances ; and the scientific inquirer must grope his way in the dark, and the accounts he may afterwards give of his observations and inquiries respecting the manners and customs, the civil, moral and religious state, and the ancient monuments of the East, will always be, in proportion as he has been without such aid, poor and defective.

The scientific Pashly, in his travels in Crete, Vol. I. p. 11. says: "I thought it worth while to do this, (i. e. to learn the native language,) since most of the information of any value, which I hoped to obtain here, could only be acquired by intercourse with those who know no other language than the Cretan." And this of course would always be the feeling of a man in similar circumstances. But as there are now hundreds of European travellers passing this way towards the East, who for many reasons could not acquire a sufficient knowledge of such difficult languages as the Arabic, the Turkish, or the Persian, the Maltese of accredited good character, who might be duly qualified to supply such deficiency, in the capacity of interpreter, would prove of immense value to them; especially as the interpreters, that are generally met with in those countries, are not over faithful. Pashley says: (Vol. I. p. 174.) "I myself discovered, that the interpreters here never even try to translate the words used; they give what they suppose to be the sense of the whole sentence, and since they frequently misunderstand what is said, they equally falsify both the form and substance of what they ought to translate." (See also Gobat's Abyssinia, p. 134, 135, for an illustration of this subject.) How many imperfect and erroneous ideas must have been conveyed, how many incorrect accounts and false statements given, respecting Eastern countries, merely through a want of good interpreters!

Were the Maltese, therefore, to profit by their dialect, for the study of Oriental languages, such as the Arabic, the Persian, the Turkish, and the Abyssinian, they might, by their aid, render travelling in the East, even as far as the East Indies, both easy, pleasant, and

profitable, and would thereby perform the most acceptable services to the world, and especially to England. The valuable assistance which they might render to English ships of war along the Eastern coast of the Mediterranean, the Black and Red seas, and the Persian gulf, especially in the present times, is quite obvious.

Again, of what importance to Government would it be, if the various Ministers and Consuls of Great Britain, in the Barbary States, Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor, Constantinople, and Persia, could avail themselves of the aid of Maltese loyal British subjects, for intrusting to their hands the business of interpretation and translation, instead of committing matters of the greatest moment to the hands of foreigners? What a pity, that amongst an Arabic population of one hundred and twenty thousand, and the many intelligent and respectable Maltese youths desirous of employment, there should none be found capable of entering into such engagements, for want of suitable preparation! How satisfactory and encouraging would it be, if in important enterprises, such as the late Euphrates Expedition, and other missions of various kinds in the East, England might always reckon upon the Maltese for faithful and efficient assistance and cooperation. But taking things as they are, no one ought to be surprised at their failures; they do not occur from want of natural ability, but from want of education; they are not prepared for such important undertakings.

Further, if we turn our eyes to Africa, that part of the world which the Maltese are mostly in the habit of visiting, and consider the immense treasures which must be buried in the natural history, geology, mineralogy, botany, and zoology of this vast, rich and

mysterious continent, it seems as if providence was pointing them out as the most fit instruments for their discovery, and for opening the way of civilization to its benighted inhabitants. From all the accounts lately given, we learn that the Arabic language is spoken to a great extent in the interior of Africa. Now, as the Maltese are bred to a warm climate, frugal, sober and industrious in their habits, retaining a great deal of Eastern manners, and speaking the Arabic as their native tongue, they possess the best advantages for visiting and exploring the golden fountains of this hitherto unexplored region, of opening an intelligible intercourse with a vast number of its population, of giving a correct account of their condition, and for exercising an extensive influence towards the amelioration of the moral state of millions of the human race. If, for instance, an undertaking like that under the late Mr. Lander, partly consisted of Maltese properly educated in the Arabic language, it would most likely prove very successful, and turn out pregnant with happy results. By their assistance, a mercantile line might be established along the banks of the Niger, on which, the farther they settled, the more easy would probably be their negotiations in regard to language, and this line might then gradually be extended back to Malta by the overland route of Timbuctoo, Fez, Tripoli, or Tunis. What an extensive and interesting line of communication ! And surely, if the Maltese could be usefully employed in joining its links, such an employment would be well calculated to excite a spirit of enterprise, and to raise the standard of active intelligence among them, to further the interests and to extend the influence of Malta and Great Britain, and to place the Maltese, in an eminent sense, among the benefactors of poor Africa.

We are struck with surprise when we reflect how much care is bestowed in England, and how many thousands of pounds are expended, by large companies, societies, and private individuals, in the education of youths especially designed for the East; when again we turn our eyes to Malta, which possesses such great advantages in this respect, and where the usefulness of such education presents itself to our view from all quarters, we behold the utmost disregard paid to the study of Oriental literature. What an honour is it to a youth in England, France or Germany, to have made some progress in the Hebrew, the Arabic or the Persian languages. But in Malta, such knowledge seems to be treated with indifference, in proportion as it is easier of acquirement, and may conduce to greater utility. As long as such feelings are prevalent among the people at Malta, they obviously mistake the position of this island, and the advantages which it affords them, especially in connexion with the English Government.

We have now to offer only a few more remarks on the use of the literal Arabic, with regard to such youths as study the sciences. Professional and scientific study having been rendered so very accessible at the Government University in Valletta, the number of students at that institution may easily grow too large for the limited demand at Malta for persons of the learned professions; and unless some source can be opened for suitable employment, for young men thus educated, the consequences of such disproportion may prove, not only injurious to the community at large, but also destructive to learning itself. Now, a very fair opening presents itself through the channel of the literal Arabic.

Gentlemen of a learned profession, physicians for instance, and persons of general acquirements in the sciences, such as Chemistry, Natural and Practical Philosophy, especially the Mechanics, Mathematics, Geometry, Algebra, Astronomy, Navigation, &c, are much wanted, and are highly valued in many parts of the East, especially in Egypt, the Barbary States, Turkey and Persia, and the more so, if acquainted with the languages of these countries. The Arabic is the most requisite, as it is not only by far the most extensive language of the East, but also, as we have shewn, the key to the Persian and the Turkish. Yet for them, as *learned* persons, a *common* knowledge of language is not enough; they ought to be acquainted with the *literary* parts thereof. Just as some centuries ago, a good Grammarian in Europe was generally identified as a learned man; so it is now in Arabic countries. Any person that can shew himself to be acquainted with good Arabic authors, and especially with the elegance of Arabic literature, will have but little difficulty to introduce himself to influential persons and respectable society, and to secure their esteem. In fact, with such acquirements, the Maltese would be able to give even to the best educated Arabs an infallible criterion of his scientific character. He could shew them, that he knew the more elegant parts of what they knew, and yet something beyond and better; and that this his additional and more excellent knowledge, he could teach in classical language. This would naturally tend to remove any doubt or prejudice, in reference to his superior abilities, and secure to him, as a learned man, general and lasting confidence. Now, we would by no means maintain, that a good scholar of any practical

science may not turn his acquirements to some good account in these countries, even without the knowledge of these classical languages; but this is our decided opinion, that such knowledge will, in general, greatly add to his personal esteem, heighten the confidence in his abilities, and enlarge and facilitate the sphere of his general usefulness. Indeed, recent experience quite confirms this opinion. For instance: the scientific knowledge acquired by some Arabic youths, whom the Pasha of Egypt lately sent to Europe, is now well received from them by their countrymen, in proportion as they are able to impart it in correct and graceful language. (See Mr. F. Fresnel's *Lettres sur L'Histoire des Arabes*, Avertissement, p. vi.) And, even apart from the peculiar feelings of the Arabs on this subject, we may say, that this mode of reasoning is common every where. For instance: what impression could a gentleman, desirous of recommending his professional services, make upon society in England, if he were to try to introduce himself by writing notes in incorrect orthography, or by personal visits, when he constantly exposed himself by his bad pronunciation and vulgar language? If he were a foreigner, that perhaps might pass with many as an excuse; but if he came from a certain county, where they speak merely a somewhat corrupt dialect, he would, in his professional character, in no wise be excused, but would be generally pronounced an illiterate man. And in a similar light must a literary Maltese appear to the better educated Arabs of Egypt, Syria, &c, without a proper knowledge of the literal Arabic.

Mr. Waghorn, in his pamphlet on Egypt, states, that a number of the most important situations in the

service of the Pasha of Egypt are now occupied by Frenchmen, and amongst them, there are also instructors of youth. This he mentions with a view to show the present indifference of England to her own interests in these quarters. Now without entering particularly into any discussion of the serious charge here brought against the English Government, whatever truth it may contain, it certainly receives much additional weight, when we take into consideration the wants, language, manners and customs of her subjects at Malta, in every respect so well adapted to promote British influence in the Eastern countries. An university established here with a special reference to this object, wherein a number of intelligent youths to whom the Arabic is vernacular, should be suitably qualified, according to their circumstances, for professors or teachers in public or higher schools, would be one of the most fit and efficient means of enlightening the East, of pouring into it the literary treasures of Europe, and at the same time, of advancing the interests of Great Britain. Further, the English is beginning to be much sought after in Eastern countries, and a school was some time ago established by Mahommed Ali for training up youth to a knowledge of this language, in which, because a more suitable person could not be procured, he employed a Spanish gentleman as tutor. Besides, numbers desire to acquire a knowledge of the English to aid them in their commercial transactions; and but very lately a company of Arab gentlemen from Egypt, expressed their readiness to pay any price for books to assist them in studying this language, so great was their apparent anxiety to acquire it. Here then is another field of usefulness for

which Maltesé students are especially adapted, through the very advantageous means they possess for becoming well versed in both these languages, and thus well qualified to be competent preceptors, and useful in other ways, by preparing appropriate works for the more general spread of the English language. But instead of pursuing a plan for securing such desirable ends, an almost diametrically opposite one has been supported, with no small expense of labour and money. By educating Maltese youth in a foreign language, their national character has suffered, their natural energies have been cramped, their usefulness contracted, while their preposterous mode of education has been condemned by their neighbours, who have taken every advantage of the fatal mistake, for promoting their own interest to the detriment of ours. Surely it is high time that a plan so prejudicial to the Maltese should be abandoned, and such means taken, as shall secure to this people an education suitable to their circumstances, and better calculated to advance their interests.

But now, the serious objection may perhaps be raised, that the use of the literal Arabic, to the extent here proposed, would impose a very difficult task, and one for which the Maltese would be incompetent. To this we answer, that we admit the difficulty of the task; but the idea of the incompetency of the Maltese for its performance, we reject. Though it be the most natural, and consequently, ultimately the most easy plan to use the literal Arabic, for the education and the literature of the Maltese, yet it has its difficulties, particularly at first. For how shall we begin, so long as we have neither competent masters nor appropriate school books?

As to the first difficulty, there can be little doubt, that a suitable person might be procured from Syria or Egypt, who should act as Arabic preceptor to such youths, as may be found competent in other respects, and willing to devote themselves to the work of education in the capacity of school-masters.* The literary labours of such a teacher, in this sphere, would greatly tend to the facilitating of Arabic learning in general.

In reference to books, both for common and upper schools, we have greatly to lament the scantiness of Arabic works ready for public service at Malta. Whilst the universities of Spain, France, Germany, England and Italy have collected together, with great difficulty and expense, immense treasures of Oriental and especially of Arabic literature, the utmost vigilance seems to have been exercised, lest any should have been suffered to visit our island on their way to Europe, and leave a blessing behind. Many of the works, however, mentioned on p. 61, might easily be procured from Turkey, by the aid of which, together with the religious books used by Christians in the East, to whom the Arabic is vernacular, an appropriate set of school books, such as are now employed in other Roman Catholic countries, might soon be prepared at Malta. Such an undertaking in times past was attended with so much expense, labour, and difficulties of various kinds, that much may be said in palliation of

* In regard to the necessity and importance of a proper education in the masters of schools, see p. 51. Some excellent remarks on this subject are also made by Mrs. Austin, in her translation of the Report on the state of Public Instruction in Prussia, p. xix. and 62. And throughout that valuable work, much information relative to it may be obtained, especially at p. 62 et seq. p. 168 et seq. p. 323 et seq.

the grievous neglect it has experienced under circumstances so unfavourable; but no such excuse can be argued in our days.

Beside the interest taken in several places of Europe in Oriental literature, we would again mention the different presses in the Levant, which have issued during the last twenty years, a great number and variety of Arabic works; a list of some published at Malta we here present, against which no objection in point of religion could be made.

1. Several spelling-books, one containing Lockman's Arabic fables and proverbs, a portion of which have been preserved in the pure Arabic.

2. A Geography, compiled from Woodbridge's Rudiments, and the article on this science in Mitchell's Universal Catechist, with an Atlas.

3. Outlines of general history, according to Pinnock's Catechism, with some additions from Abulfeda, the Egyptian Historian.

4. Treatise on Astronomy, from Pinnock.

5. Several Arabic Grammars.

6. An Arabic-English grammar, and soon, a set of dialogues in both languages to accompany it.

7. Robinson Crusoe, which is an imitation of the Arabic History of Hai Ebn Joktan, by Aboo Djafe Ebn Tofail of the 12th. century.

8. Rudiments of Arithmetic for children, according to Pestalozzi's method.

Shortly also there will be printed here, Mavor's Natural history for the use of schools.

The above, parts and extracts from which have been reprinted at the Grand Sultan's press in Constantinople, and at that of the Pasha of Egypt at Boolak, are

particularly adapted for children in the Mediterranean countries, and may be had already prepared at Malta. Any other similar works required, might easily be written and printed on the spot.

As to works, which refer to the upper branches of modern science, they will have chiefly to be translated from European languages; (when once this plan shall have embraced the study of such branches) an employment this, whereby the Maltese may not only benefit themselves, but the whole East. I must not, however, omit mentioning, that some books of this kind have been lately translated and printed at Boolak in Egypt, and others are preparing for print under the direction of very good scholars.

But there will be internal difficulties greater than these, resulting from the long neglect of cultivating the mental faculties of the greater part of the people, and from prejudice with regard to many. As to the first, we can only say, that as there can be nothing proposed to them more natural for the developement and cultivation of the mind, than the mother tongue, upon which man depends for mental, just as the child for bodily growth on the breast of its mother; so we should have to leave them for ever uneducated, if they were found incapable of being educated therein. And as to the latter, by which many even of the upper classes may be influenced, it is to be hoped, that they, forming as they ought, the most considerate part of the community, although perhaps unfavourably biassed, through the long and perverse mode of using a foreign tongue in their education and studies, will nevertheless perceive it to be their interest and credit, to use in future for these purposes the classical language of *their*

own. We believe it is for *them* to execute the more difficult parts of this plan; they must be the first, as our neighbours the Arabs would say, to climb the steep and rugged hill, for the crown of merited distinction, or to dive to the very bottom of the ocean, for the pearl, the value of which is augmented by its use. It is not a common thing to attain to distinction in any scientific pursuit, *Omnia præclara rara*, and proficiency and excellency in Oriental literature, is not the least rare among the rest. It will never be reached with the habits of the Abbate in Göthe, (*Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Vol. II. p. 279.) who says: “Che pensa! Non deve mai pensar l’uomo, pensando s’ invecchia. Non deve mai fermarsi l’uomo in una sola cosa, perche allora divien matto, bisogna aver mille cose, una confusione nella testa.” “What, think! A man must never think, thinking makes one old. A man must never stick to any one thing, for then he will become a fool; he must have a thousand things, a confusion in his head.” A better advice on this point gives the Arabic Poet, expressed in the following ethical strophe:

بقدر الكد تكتسب المعالي ومن طلب العلا سهر الليالي
 تروم العز ثم تنام ليسلا يغوص البحر من طلب اللالي

“In proportion to your endeavours, you will attain to excellence. He that aspires after distinction has to pass sleepless nights. If you are anxiously striving after wealth, can you sleep (carelessly) by night? He that seeks for pearls, must dive into the ocean.” (Prof. Freitag’s *Fakeha ylhola*, p. 104.) However, we have but little fear in this respect, for if the Maltese be deficient in any thing, truly it is not in industry; and I have no doubt, that if once fairly set to work, *judging from their general aptness of philological*

talent, and the great advantages they have from their dialect, it will not be long before they carry the palm, and rise to a superiority over every nation of Europe in Oriental literature. Indeed, if they were to fall short of excellence in the pursuit of studies, for which they enjoy every advantage and facility above all Europe, we might then give up the hope of their ever arriving at any scientific distinction. This however we are not inclined to do. Unhappily they have never tried this path; but, if they should once make an effort, and so far succeed, as to discover the possibility of their acquiring and wearing the wreath of preeminence in some one scientific pursuit, it is very probable that this would encourage them to press onward to other branches of science.

If by the perverse method of learning and studying in a foreign tongue, whereby, as well as by other unfavourable circumstances, the originality and natural talent of their minds are cramped, the Maltese have failed of obtaining high literary honours, we need not be surprised. We only wonder, that with their laudable zeal for the preservation of their rights, they could have suffered themselves to lie so long under the stigma that has been put upon their character as a nation, by setting up among them a foreign tongue for the national cultivation of the native mind. Yes, it is a stigma upon the character of a people, who by reason of their language, and by perhaps still more essential ties, are intimately connected with that great, and early eminently civilized nation, the Arabs, whose most prominent principle has been from the beginning independence of character; — whose national pride has always been centred in their ancient, rich, and elegant

language; — who, whithersoever they went in their victorious course, proved the universal promoters of sciences and the fine arts; — by the fire of whose poetry, some centuries ago, the poetical metal of Europe was purified from its dross, and refined with more elegant taste; — whose scientific pursuits still glitter through the sciences of the present day, in many technicalities; — and the loftiness of whose literary attainments shone before those of any other nation, in lucid and indelible signs among the stars;* — I say it is a gross stigma upon such a people, who have a right to claim so well cultivated a language as the Arabic for their own, to have one of foreign origin introduced amongst them to be the basis of all instruction, and the instrument for their education as a nation. Might not such a course justly expose them to the suspicion, that they were either incapable of appreciating the value of the Arabic, or unable to cultivate it for this important purpose?

It is much to be regretted, that the Knights of Malta did not more clearly discern the great advantages of the Maltese dialect, for the furtherance of their objects. Pope Pius V. says in a celebrated bull, inserted by the learned Maracci, in his Preface to the Coran, Vol. II. p. 7: “*Viris Catholicis, notitiam linguarum habentibus, quibus utuntur infideles, præcipue abundare sanctam affectamus ecclesiam: qui infideles ipsos sciant et valeant sacris institutis instruere, Christicolarumque collegio per doctrinam Christianæ fidei, ac susceptionem*

* Consult Andres, II. p. 129. Hallam's introduction to the literature of Europe. Vol. I. p. 13 and 24. Herder's *Iddeen zur Geschichte der Menschheit*, vierter Theil, p. 259 — 272. Turner's *Sacred History of the world*, Vol. II. p. 536.

sacri Baptismatis aggregare." "It is our anxious wish, that the Holy Church should particularly abound in Catholic persons, who have a knowledge of the languages used by infidels; and who may know and be capable to instruct these infidels in the holy institutes, and to gather them to the congregation of the Christians, by the doctrine of the Christian faith, and by the administration of Holy Baptism." What a noble addition to their gallant actions, and extensive works at Malta, might the Knights have made, had they been actuated by the excellent sentiments of this reverend father, and raised the greatest monument of a people's honour, by providing the Maltese with an education best suited to their condition. How useful they might have rendered this people to the Church, if they had appropriated but a very little of the immense resources which Christendom placed at their disposal, by establishing here well endowed Arabic colleges and schools, and by making use of a well educated population of Arabic Christians, for the protection and extension of the Church of Christ in Arabic countries. And in what a different state of mental activity and learning might this island now have been, if such a course had been begun by the Knights, and properly and faithfully continued since their time. The Maltese might then not only have been an enlightened people themselves, but they might also have been instrumental, in many ways, in promoting the advancement of learning and useful knowledge, both in the East and in the West. Especially if the Knights had established superior schools endowed with such provisions, as that the different branches of science, e. g. Theology, Jurisprudence, Medicine, Chemistry, Botany,

Experimental Philosophy, the Mathematics, Astronomy, Navigation, History, and Natural history, could have been well taught in the Arabic language, this place would doubtless then have been visited by many youths from Eastern countries, to profit by such institutions, where in their own languages, they might much easier, and with much less expense of time and money, pursue scientific study, in quest of which they are now obliged to travel to France or to England; whilst on the other hand, European youths would probably have resorted hither to perfect themselves in Oriental literature, or to prepare themselves for travelling or residing in Eastern countries.

Notwithstanding, however, the many arguments that may be adduced in favour of the general adoption of the Arabic in the educational system of Malta, it is said that some of her people would perhaps still feel more honoured by a scanty knowledge of the Italian, than by a proficiency in the Arabic, and who would therefore, not only quietly submit to the national obloquy of having the Italian used here as the basis of all instruction, but who would even prefer it to the Arabic. How far such sentiments may prevail, we cannot exactly guess; we trust not very far, as they are anti-Maltese, and show, in my opinion, a want of patriotism. For, if it be true, that the literal Arabic is but the classical language of the Maltese, and if that language is capable of being used for such important and useful purposes, as has been shewn in the preceding pages, ought not every patriotic Maltese to esteem it as a national possession of great value? Will he not discover in it an object of such relative and vital importance, *that if properly regarded will necessarily advance, and*

if neglected, inevitably injure the public and national interest? Must he not perceive, in the introduction of a foreign language for the general developement of the mind of his compatriots, a measure which has a tendency to destroy that particularity of character which has hitherto distinguished his nation among the families of the earth? Or, can it be a matter of indifference to him, whether the Oriental character of his countrymen, preserved to them by a kind providence, chiefly by reason of their mother tongue, which still exhibits its excellency as an Arabic dialect, and shines, though in unpolished beauty, through the reproaches heaped upon it by long neglect, and amidst a great many serious changes and the extinction of other languages around him; — can it be a matter of no concern to the Maltese patriot, I ask, if that character goes to ruin or not? Regarded then in a national point of view, and reflecting calmly on the weighty considerations connected with it in this relation, will not the true lover of his country vote the use of his mother tongue for the improvement and expansion of the native mind, nor for a moment consider a foreign language deserving a preference for such purposes? Why, he might very naturally argue, should we give up the great conveniences and advantages which our own mother tongue affords, simply at the desire and for the accommodation of foreigners, who may or may not be aware of the nature, usefulness and importance of that which they wish us to lay aside, or not sufficiently acquainted with it to pass a right judgment on the matter? And besides, is there no reason to suspect, that by their desire to palm upon us their plan, they are influenced by interested motives, as was in all probability the case.

at least in some degree, when the Italian was introduced by the Sicilians? Surely every Maltese has a just right to demand reasons, why his nation should thus throw away a valuable patrimonial inheritance, which, if duly cultivated, would promote their national welfare and advancement. Would it be rational or just, he might further urge, to have our language condemned to ignominious neglect, even without a moment's consideration, and without the least effort being made towards its cultivation and use? Would it not be more patriotic and philosophical to endeavour first to refine, to improve, and thus to elevate the standard of our language, and with it the intellectual character of our nation, as far as it is connected with it, instead of throwing it aside, unexamined, as useless, thereby to alienate ourselves from our kindred nations in the East, to debar ourselves from a large sphere of usefulness, and to forfeit many apparent prospects of advantage? Let the advocate on the other side of the question, considering the momentous consequences depending on this subject, weigh well and impartially the arguments which I adduce in favour of my own language being used for the purposes of education and literature; and if after such an examination he can bring evident proofs to invalidate my argument, and to convince me, that the use of a foreign language for these purposes will be far more advantageous to us than our own, I shall no longer obstinately defend a measure which may prove injurious to myself and to my nation, but thankfully adopt his. But as long as the opposite plan is proposed on no such ground, and can be founded on no such solid and invincible arguments, I shall regard the *adoption of it*, as an infringement of our rights, inju-

rious to the welfare of our country, and detrimental to our national character.

But here it may be objected, that in our days we must not look to the East for obtaining the means best calculated to improve the institutions of a country, and to elevate its national character;—that under divine providence, Europe has evidently been raised up and constituted the spring to put in motion and direct all the activity and energy of mankind for their moral welfare and happiness;—that the present general state of European civilization, arts, sciences, civil and religious institutions, national prosperity, greatness and influence, seem to be put forth, in a measure, as patterns for improvement to the nations of other continents; so that a plan that would advocate such a general use of an Eastern language, totally unknown to Europeans, however advantageous it may be in many respects, may still fail in promoting the best interests of the Maltese, on account of its general tendency to restrain European influence.

In reply to the above, we are ready to admit the present superiority and distinguished position of Europe, and also the desirableness that its example should be brought to bear upon other parts of the world, for the promotion of their individual and national welfare. It is our heartfelt wish, that the beneficial influence which Europe is capable of exercising, may not only soon be felt in Malta to the greatest possible extent, but also wing its rapid flight towards the East, and impart its choicest blessings to every Eastern nation. In pursuing this benevolent plan, however, we as sincerely trust, that no friend of philanthropy will propose the prior eradication of the Oriental languages as necessary to

the realization of his scheme, nor deem the task impracticable, unless this can be first effected. Such a preposterous proposal would be no evidence to an Eastern people of that superiority of which Europe may justly boast; for none would certainly regard it as an evidence of superior intelligence, if the attempt was to be made, to restore to them their ancient lore by such a proceeding, or to improve the present state of information and literature in Arabic countries, through the substitution of a foreign language. Would not such a proceeding almost necessarily imply, that there was some moral or physical impracticability in conveying a satisfactory knowledge of the superior intelligence and general prosperity of Europe to an Eastern people, through such a well cultivated medium as the Arabic? I have no hesitation in saying, that the Arabs, the Persians and the Turks, who are sufficiently conscious of the superior claims which their respective languages, especially the Arabic merit,* would unanimously pronounce such a proceeding, as an example of Vandal barbarism, exercised upon them in the nineteenth century, by enlightened Europe. And why should the Eastern people not enjoy the knowledge of all that is excellent in Europe in their own language? If the Arabs could maintain a superiority of learning over the rest of the world in former ages in the use of their own language, what hindrance does it present to their being raised to the same distinction now?

Moreover, the knowledge of an European language

* Wisdom, says Muhammed Ed-Dumiri, has alighted upon three things: the brain of the Greeks, the hands of the Chinese and the language of the Arabs.

is not to be identified with the enjoyment of European privileges; it may contribute to secure them, and it may not. For even an European nation may be possessed of the most cultivated language, and yet be far from exhibiting that degree of national prosperity, as to entitle it to be held forth as an example for imitation. There is undoubtedly a vast distinction to be made in the state of civilization, civil liberty, and national blessings enjoyed by the respective kingdoms of Europe.

If, however, an intelligent non European people should be driven to the necessity of having their customs and manners, their public institutions and their very character changed, and should be free in the selection of an example from which to copy, we would naturally expect them to make such a choice, as would promise to yield the greatest advantages to their nation. Now, without drawing any invidious or partial distinctions, we may venture to say, that were the Maltese to follow the example of the English, and to identify themselves with the national character of that people, in preference to any other in Europe, instead of losing thereby, they would on the contrary certainly feel themselves raised to a precedence in the scale of nationality. And, is it therefore unjust or unreasonable to expect, that if the Maltese found it necessary to introduce the general use of a foreign language, in order to improve their condition and to advance their national interest, they, as subjects of Great Britain, would use the English before any other? Besides, can it be doubted for a moment, that a knowledge of the English language would be one of the most effectual means which the Maltese could adopt for the realization of the desire manifested by Great Britain, and the recent decided

measures she has taken, to put her Maltese subjects into the possession of every possible civil advantage?

As I have already offered some remarks in my first letter on this bearing of the question, when I advocated a more general use of the English language, I shall not here enlarge, but simply adduce a few arguments, which, though of a local nature, I consider as of great importance, and relevant to the Maltese and English interest in general.

In the first place, I would mention, that by a general knowledge of the English among the Maltese, the British residents at Malta, and by virtue of their persons, the English and the Maltese people generally, would become better known to each other. I do not say, that even at the present day acquaintances are not formed; for it is well known that the greatest intimacy exists between many highly respectable individuals of both nations; but it seems to follow as a matter of course, that by a general spread of the English language, mutual intercourse would be extended and facilitated, and thus the respective character of each become more distinctly and correctly known. After long observation, it is my sincere belief, that there are many virtuous qualities, nay even excellencies, which lie as it were hid in the Maltese and English characters, and which need only to be understood and known in order to secure reciprocal esteem and confidence. And, what an improvement would it be in society here, if tone, feelings, manners and interests were united, and if one cordial sympathy pervaded the whole community? What a satisfactory and pleasant feeling would it create in the minds of the English on arriving at Malta, *to feel that while they were leaving home, they were*

coming among a people of the same manners and feelings with themselves; and how desirable to the Maltese people, fully to enjoy the great privileges and blessings of the English nation. Why then ought a plan to be sanctioned or pursued, which instead of tending to produce this desirable alliance, will only widen the distance between the two nations, and ever prove a barrier to a solid and permanent union of mind and interest? Why should the use of the Italian for the general purposes of education and literature be proposed or encouraged, if the consequences of such a measure would so materially injure the best interests of the Maltese and of the English people?

Again, we may consider the great acquisition it would be to those Maltese who may proceed to Eastern countries, if to their knowledge of the Arabic was joined an acquaintance with the English, together with the spirit and manners of Englishmen, which they would naturally imbibe in the course of their education. In such circumstances, the Maltese, through his knowledge of Arabic, would carry with him a key to Eastern countries, and have access to their most respectable societies; and being acquainted with the English language, with the rights and character of an Englishman, he would possess a store of such national, moral and mental resources, as will always command respectability, materially assist him to advance his own interest, powerfully contribute to extend the interests of Great Britain, and enable him to exercise a wide and beneficial influence upon those whom he may visit. Coming with such qualifications, the respective Ministers and Consuls in the Arabic countries, which the Maltese are in the habit of visiting, would be better enabled

to afford them all the benefits of protection, and to assist them in the prosecution of their interests, which they as British subjects may claim, than they can do at present. In such a case, they would be capable of directly communicating with the Maltese, and thus avoid the inconvenience and unsatisfactoriness of treating with them in a foreign language, or through the medium of an interpreter.

The great advantages which a more extended use of the English language presents, in its relation to the administrations of Government, are sufficiently obvious. In fact, I think the expediency, usefulness and importance of this plan is so clear and self evident, that the more it is considered, the more it must excite surprise, that a word of apology should be thought necessary. The writer therefore feels it superfluous to dwell any longer on advocating its adoption, and only laments his incompetency to do the subject that justice, which he thinks it so fully deserves.

As to the manner of proceeding in order to bring the English into more general use at Malta, (beyond which I would not at present advocate its adoption,) I think this might be effected, by bringing the benefits of education within the reach of every child, by means of Government schools, established for such purposes, in the town and in the country; by having the English and not the Italian taught therein, by means of the Arabic; and by giving more general encouragement to the spread of the language, as by preferring to eligibility for public offices and situations under Government, such persons whose progress in the English should render them deserving of such preferment.

The execution of this plan would receive considerable impulse and assistance from various existing and strongly operative causes, which bid fair to ensure its success. The great and more general interest which the Maltese begin to manifest in the proceedings of the British Parliament; — (a laudable curiosity, which can only be fully satisfied by a competent knowledge of the English;) the number of English travellers constantly passing and repassing, and occasionally remaining here for a short season; — the schools which several respectable English gentlemen have established in the city; — and especially, the permanent residing of thousands of Englishmen of all classes of society in these islands, together with an English Government; — are so many powerful means which this plan commands to bring about its beneficial design, and like which nothing can be produced in favour of the Italian.

Further, it is beyond doubt, that although the English language has hitherto not received its due in public instruction, it has yet made considerable inroads among the Maltese population. It is spoken by many of the upper classes, and as the English themselves confess, in many instances, remarkably well. Those engaged in the commercial line and who deal chiefly with the navy, almost all speak it, and even transact much of their business by means of the English; and, I think we are warranted in believing, that the Italian is growing into disuse, if we may judge from the fact, that among ship-chandlers, shopkeepers and tradesmen of all descriptions, the Maltese and English are the languages chiefly made use of. It may be observed among the Maltese generally, that when they begin a discourse in Italian, they either introduce detached

words or sentences of their own language, or very naturally soon drop the Italian entirely, and continue the conversation in the Maltese. As to the poorer classes of the town people, if they know any thing of a foreign language, it is chiefly the English. We meet with many servants, boatmen, and calesse-drivers, who scarcely know a word of Italian, but who are able to discourse pretty well in English; and the reason is obvious. Among themselves they use their native tongue, as well as with the upper classes whom they may happen to serve; and the foreigners with whom they come into contact, and whom it is their interest to be capable of understanding and of making themselves understood by, are principally, almost exclusively English. Why then, should they encumber themselves with a third language, which is scarcely of any use to them; and why should they, under such circumstances, be burdened with that language in a plan of public instruction, and at the expense of the Public? The upper classes, who have the means of acquiring and keeping up a knowledge of the Italian, will not misspend their time and money by paying some attention to it as a branch of polite literature; but as to the poor and working classes, to whom this language brings more trouble than profit, if profit at all, the introduction of it into a national system of education, will only be throwing a great obstacle in their way to acquiring the English, from which they at present derive, and hereafter may derive, still greater advantage.

I think the Maltese have arrived at a period, when not only this peculiar branch in the system of education, but their education in general, deserves very

serious consideration ; yet not consideration alone, but the ready cooperation of the people, in applying themselves to carry through such measures, as seem best calculated to effect this important object.

Well might we wish, that the Maltese were in this respect inspired with the commendable feelings of our neighbours the Greeks. No sooner was their country delivered from the oppressor's hand, than, depressed as they were, they roused themselves as a nation, high and low, rich and poor, to shake off the garb of ignorance, in our days so reproachful to a Christian people, and endeavoured with all their might, to render themselves worthy of their illustrious descent, and to become a light to the world. Schools of various descriptions were immediately established all over the country, by private individuals, by communities, by foreign societies, by the Church and by Government, for effecting a universal and thorough education of their nation. The present Government having taken a course framed upon the German compulsory school system, it will not be long, before the whole of the rising generation will live in the enjoyment of a sound education in their own language. We regret to say, that hitherto we have sought in vain for any such earnest exertions and sacrifices at Malta, in behalf of this most important measure, the education of the people. But our hope is, that a change is now about to take place with regard to this weighty concern. May it be a *thorough change for the better* ! Indeed we would not wish for a sudden overthrow of the whole of the old system ; but for a wise adoption, and a persevering use of such means, as may procure for the Maltese people the incalculable

benefit of an education in their own language, and as will be best suited to their minds, and their circumstances. And may they soon find themselves in perfect possession of all the good that a knowledge of one, nay of more than one of the most perfect of languages can confer on them, and be enabled to prove to the West a happy illustration of the Latin motto,

“EX ORIENTE LUX.”

C. F. SCHLIENZ.

Valletta, October 26, 1837.



APPENDIX,*

Containing some of the chief peculiarities of the Maltese language, considered as a modern Arabic dialect.

A great many Arabic words, used in their full consonant forms in the Maltese dialect, exhibit a variety of changes with regard to their vowel signs. The Fatha, Kesra and Damma (the short a, i, u,) are augmented into a, e, i, y, o and u, and are employed in such a vague manner, that an endeavour to correct Maltese orthography in this particular, according to the rules of Arabic Grammar, would only increase the confusion. Therefore, it would perhaps be best to leave them out entirely in writing, as the Arabs generally do, if the plan should ever be adopted of writing the Maltese in Arabic characters; upon which subject we have already made several remarks on pages 46, 47. As to the long vowels, a, i, u, answering the Arabic **ا و ي**, their use and pronunciation has been pretty well preserved, especially in town. The only important peculiarity which they exhibit lies in the pronunciation of the Aleph, **ا**, which is generally

* We beg to remark, that throughout this Appendix, we have made use of Vassallis' Alphabet in the writing of the Maltese, except in such places where it has been necessary to introduce the Roman, for a better elucidating of the differences of sound in various letters.

ÿ, (pronounce this letter like *ea* in *ear*; throughout this article on the peculiar pronunciation of the Aleph, ا;) as in كِتْـبْ Ktÿb, a *book*. It is, however, wrong to maintain with Gesenius, that this pronunciation is only peculiar to the Maltese; (see his treatise on the Maltese, p. 2.) an approximation to it we perceive in the Moorish ا, as in باش bash, (pronounce the *a* as in *base*) and especially in the Arabic dialect of Syria, in which the Aleph is pronounced in many words exactly in the same manner with the Maltese; as for instance, in كَاتِبْ Kÿteb, *writing*, حِزَامْ fizÿm, a *bridle*; كِلَابْ klÿb, *dogs*. (Compare here Perceval's remarks on the pronunciation of the letter ا in Syria, in his *Grammar of the Vulgar Arabic*, p. 1, 2.)

De Sacy has endeavoured to explain the above pronunciation of the ا in his *Arabic Grammar*, Vol. I. p. 37. He says, § 77: "This pronunciation is called by the Arabs اِمَالَة i. e. *inclination*, (of the sound from the *e* to the *a*) and is quite peculiar to certain words in the reading of the *Coran*." Arabic Grammarians, however, speak of this pronunciation, not as being confined to certain words in the reading of the *Coran*, but as of a thing in general use, and regulated by the principles of Grammar. In an *Arabic Grammar*, printed at Boolak in Egypt, two years ago, and which follows Ebn Malek, we read p. 269 in the باب الامالة *the chapter of the inclination*: كَذَلِكَ تَمَالَ الْاَلِفُ الواقعة بعد اليا المتصلة بها نحو بيان او منفصلة بحرف نحو يسار او بحرفين احدهما هاء نحو ادر جيبها (not ادرجيبها which is a typographical error) فان لم يكن احدهما هاء امتنعت الامالة لبعده

“The Aleph inclines, if it follows the letter **ي** ya, and is connected by it, as **بيان** bajyñ, *an explanation*; or if it is intervened by one letter, as **يسار** jasâr, *he leaves some wine or meat*; or by two letters, one of them being a **ه** ha, as **ادرجيبها** adir gibehy, *put her collar around*; but if neither of the two intervening letters is a **ه**, the **إمالة** (inclination) is lost on account of the distance of the Aleph from the **ي** as **بيننا** beinana, *between us*.

Again, we read, **كذلك تمال الالف اذا وليتها** كسرة نحو عالم او وقعت بعد حرف يلي كسرة نحو كتاب او بعد حرفين وليا كسرة اولها ساكن نحو شمال او كلاهما متحرك ولكن احدهما هاء نحو يريد ان يضربها وكذلك يمال ما فصل فيه الهاء بين الحرفين الذين وقعا بعد الكسرة اولها . “The Aleph inclines when the Kesra comes near to it, as **عالم** aÿlim, *knowing*; when it comes nigh a letter with a Kesra, as **كتاب** Kitÿb, *book*; after two letters that stand in connexion with a Kesra, the first being quiescent, as **شمال** shimillÿl, *a swift she camel*; or if both are moved, one of them being **ه**, as **يريد ان يضربها** jarid an jadribihÿ, *he wishes to beat her*; and finally, the Aleph inclines when the **ه** is separated from it, and falls between the two letters which follow the Kesra; the first of which being quiescent, as **هذان درهماك** hadani dirhamÿk; *these two pieces of money belong to you*.” Or, (according to Eshmuni on the same subject) when it is

preceded by three letters, the first of them being quiescent, and the second a *z*; which amounts to the same thing.

Thus we have eight different positions of the letter Aleph, in which, according to the rules of a master among Arabic Grammarians, it may assume a sound which corresponds almost entirely, perhaps exactly to what is its prevalent pronunciation in the Maltese; and the import of the peculiarity of our dialect in this instance, especially when compared with sister dialects, does not appear so very extraordinary as it has been represented. The marking it with a peculiar sign, seems, at least, to be superfluous.* See p. 46.

As to the consonants, a good many anomalies exist in the Maltese, and I think there will be found hardly one single letter which will not occasionally exhibit proof of this remark. A great many letters assume a different pronunciation, others assimilate, are transposed, omitted and added in a variety of instances. There are also compounds, and words of a peculiar signification, all of which appear as so many corruptions, when compared with the literal Arabic. With regard to pronunciation, however, we may as well observe, that there is no letter which has *totally* changed its correct Arabic sound.

Some general observations of De Sacy on the use of the Arabic letters *ظ ذ ث* and *ض د ت*, in the

* I am informed by native Arab gentlemen, who often attended the performance of the Sikers at the public festivals of the Mohammedans, that in some parts of the religious chanting performed by the Derweeshes, they also make use of this pronunciation of the *ل*.

Vulgar Arabic generally, may be seen in the *Journal des Savans*, p. 197.

Gesenius in his *Treatise on the Maltese*, p. 2, is wrong in saying, that the Arabic ج has in this dialect always the same pronunciation with that of Egypt. The fact is, it assumes in the Maltese three kinds of pronunciation: 1. That which we consider as regular, and which corresponds to the English *g* in genus, as جنس *gens*, *genus*; جديد *gdid*, *new*; جبل *gebel*, *mountain*; جرحه *gerha*, *a wound*; يجزر *jgorr*, *he transports*, &c. 2. That of Egypt, which corresponds to the English *g* in good, as جزيرة *gzira*, *island*; جدي *gedi*, *a young he goat*. 3. That of the Persian چ corresponding to the English *ch* in chapel, as يجهد *jychhad*, *he denies*; يجهف *jychfa*, *he abuses*. The Arabic ش (*sh*) occasionally assumes also the preceding sound, as يشق *jchekken*, *he checks*, *diminishes*; يشرش *jcharchar*, *he sprinkles*; شيط *chait*, *superfluity of play in speech*. (That our derivation of this word is correct, see the قاموس in the باب (Article) of the word شاط : المستشيط المبالغ في الضحك "The *mustashit*, signifies one who is addicted to too much laughter.")

The letter ب (*b*) changes sometimes into the Persian پ (*p*) as in بعد غد *pitnada*, *the day after to-morrow*; and sometimes the ف (*f*) into ب, as in يخفي *johbi*, *he hides*; يهز *jybzán*, *he fears*. Both the ك (*k*) and the غ (*g*) are sometimes turned into ج (*g*, with its pronunciation in good) as in يكذب *jygdeb*, *he lies*; كدوم *geddum*, *a snout*; يهز *jgemgem*, *he complains*, &c.

Letters are occasionally, but rarely, transposed; as in نجف *nofs*, Ar. نصف *half*; يجاب *jygejeb*, Ar. اجاب *he answers*.

Letters also assimilate sometimes: as in **اليوم** ellum, *to-day*, (where the **ي** turns into **ل**; **سائر** sejzer, *going*; **دائم** dejjem, *always*, (where the **ا** turns into **ي**;) **استقصى** yssaqsa, *he asked*, (where the **ت** is assimilated to **س**.)

Omissions of letters are rather frequent, as :

حد had,	no one,	from	أحد aḥad.
خا ḥa,	he took	—	أخذ aḥad.
طا ta,	he gave,	—	أعطى anta.
ت or تع ta,	of,	—	متاع mtan.

Additions of letters are less frequent: e. g.

لابرة labra,	a pin,	instead of	أبرة abra.
الما elma,	water,	—	ما ma.
ضول daul,	light,	—	ضو dau.
لولة lula,	woe,	—	ويل vail.

In the same way as in the Maltese **لولة**, **الما**, **لابرة**, we find the article **ال** in **الماس** almas, *a diamond*, in the colloquial Arabic, generally forming an integral part of a word.

But these differences, and irregularities of pronunciation, transposition, omission and addition, are by no means forinsec to the Arabic, both literal and colloquial, as is well known. (Confer here Hariri's **درة الغواص**.) I know of a collection of above 1500 Arabic words, made from the writings of accredited good authors, in which the foregoing and other kinds of orthographical anomalies are pointed out. It is not improbable that this collection will be published sometime hereafter.

Compound words are rather frequent in the Maltese. By compounds we do not mean the regular compositions of the article with the noun, or of the possessive pronoun with the noun or verb, prefixed or affixed to

the word ; but the composition of the preposition with the noun, of the conjunction with the verb, of the verb with the verb, of the substantive with the verb, of the noun with the noun, &c. E. g.

Lýma, which; . . .	from	لاي ما li ai ma, <i>to which of.</i>
Ynkella, or; . . .	—	ان كان لا yn kân la, <i>if it be not.</i>
Jygifyri, that is to say; —		يجي في الراي jygi fyrrai, <i>it comes into the mind.</i>
Euvela, perhaps; . . .	—	او لا au la, <i>or not.</i>
Jystajkun, possibly; —		يستطيع ان يكون jystatin an jkun, <i>it may be.</i>
Kýku, if;	—	كان يكون kân jkun, <i>he would be.</i>
Bnýdem, man; . . .	—	بن ادم Ben adam, <i>son of man.</i>
Dment, while; . . .	—	طول ما انت tul ma ent, <i>whilst you are.</i>
Fost, among; . . .	—	في وسط fy vast, <i>between.</i>
Savsef, until; . . .	—	الساعة وفي ساعة yssana u fi sana, <i>now and in the hour.</i>

However, the compounding of words of the different parts of speech is not a peculiarity to the Maltese alone; it is also found in other Arabic dialects. (Compare Perceval's Arabic Gram. from p. 74—84. Dombay's Grammar, p. 34, 85 and 109—113.) Yet the greater part of such compounds arises from the quickness, inaccuracy and indistinctness of speech, chiefly the effect of a low state of education, and not from the nature of any of these dialects, to which, in common with the literal Arabic, the use of compounds is uncongenial. (See Sir W. Jones' Works, Vol. I. p. 39.)

We must remark here, however, that we do not go the whole length of Sir William's argument. Complex ideas are expressed by the Arabs by النحت التركيب *compounds*, which are in regular use among them. A number of words might be adduced, but we will only mention the few that follow: شحتر *uqum-ahtar*, *unhappy*, from شوم and اختر; المشلول *ylmywlaus* *Damascus apricots*, fr. المشمش and لوز; هلم *halumma*, *come hither*, from ها and لم; لآشي *lâuqa*, *to come to nothing*, from لا and شي*; الحمد لله *ylhamdylla*, *the praising of God*, from الحمد and لله; السبجلة *ys-sabhylla*, *the magnifying of God*, from سبحان and لله; الحوقلة *ylhaw-qalla*, *the ascribing of all power and might to God*, from باله and لا حول ولا قوة الا بالله; hajlalla, *the acknowledging of the unity of the Deity*, from لا اله الا الله &c.

Considering these anomalies in special reference to Grammar, we notice with regard to the article, that it loses the ا before all nouns beginning with a vowel; as لوم *lomm*, *the mother*; لآخرة *lahua*, *the brothers*; and is transposed before words beginning with *n* and *m* followed by a consonant; as لانصارا *lynsâra*, *the Christians*, لآمحمددين *lymhammedin*, *the Muhammedans*. This omission and transposition of the Hamza in the article is rendered easy to the Maltese, in whose pronunciation it has entirely lost its guttural power, and has consequently become extremely light. De Sacy says in his Arabic Gram. p. 55, that the article was from the beginning only ا ل. This may be; hence its nomenclature لام التعريف 'the *Lam of determination*'.

* Though this word is neither in the قاموس nor in the صاحح yet it is used by very good writers, and deserves to be received into an Arabic Lexicon.

As to the cases of the nouns, I may just notice, that like the Vulgar Arabic generally, the Maltese dialect has no special form for the Accusative in the singular, except perhaps in the word *شيء* *qajn*, *nothing*; and that in the regular forms of the masculine plurals, they never use the form of the Nominative, but always that of the Objective cases. The Genitive forms some anomaly, on account of the use of the *تا* or *تع*; I am decidedly of the same opinion with Gesenius, (see his treatise on the Maltese, p. 12.) that it is the same word with the *متاع* of Barbary, and the *بتاع* of Egypt. Its common use speaks for it, as well as the clear appearing of the *ع* in some of its flexions, as *تعا* *tanna*, *ours*, *تكم* *tankom*, *yours*; *تاعي* *tâni*, *mine*; *تاع* *tânu*, *his*; in these two last cases the *ي* comes in by the rule of the *امالة*. If it was not for the distinctness of the *ع* in these cases, one might swell the conjectures about this word endlessly. (See also De Sacy's Arab. Chrestomathie, 1827,—Vol. III. p. 353 on this word.)

The pronouns, if compared with the Morocco, Egyptian and Yemen dialects, present no peculiarities, except that the relative singular and plural appears in the very abbreviated form *لي* *li*, *who*, instead of *الذي* *yllazi*, pl. *الذين* *yllazîn*. I am much inclined to think that this form is the original, simple singular of the plural *الاي* or *الا*. The plural of the third personal pronoun has, like the Morocco dialect, *هما* *huma*, instead of *هم* *hum*, *they*.

The apocopated forms of the numerals correspond to those of the Vulgar Arabic in general, as :

حداش *fidânu* *eleven* instead of *أحد عشر* *afîd nauṛ*.
تعاش *tnânu*, *twelve*, — *اثنا عشر* *ythna nauṛ*.
تلاتاش *tlyttânu*, *thirteen*, — *ثلاثة عشر* *thalathat nauṛ*.

(Compare Dombay's *Ar. Gram.* p. 31, and Perceval's *Arab. Gram.* p. 64.)

The flexions of the verb present, generally, very few peculiarities, in contradistinction to the Vulgar Arabic; together with which the Maltese cuts off many of the artificial terminations of the literal Arabic. The second person of the plural in the Preterite ends in و (u) and unlike the literal Arabic in م as : كَتَبْتُوا *ka-tabtu*, not كَتَبْتُمْ *katabtum*, *you have written*. This quite accords with the colloquial Arabic. (See Herbin's *Arab. Gram.* p. 58, and Perceval's table of conjugation between p. 12. and p. 13.

The first person in the singular of the future is marked by a prefixed ن ; as نَقْعِد *noqnod*, *I sit*, instead of the ا of the classical Arabic. This form is also in common use in the Morocco and Barbary dialects. (Dombay's *Gram.* p. 26.) But though the writing of the word is on this account considerably altered, its etymology seems to be preserved by the use of the Maltese, as well as by that of the classical Arabic. In both cases, I take it with the Arabic Grammarians, (see المراح *El-Marah*, printed at Boolak, p. 9.) for an abridgment of انا ; the classical Arabic has adopted the ا, the Maltese the ن of this personal pronoun, when prefixed to the original verbal noun. The first person plural then adds و (u) to distinguish it from the singular ; as نَقْعِد *noqnod*, *I sit*, نَقْعِدُو *noqnodu*, *we sit*.* This deviation from the classical Arabic, in regard to the first person singular, occasions in verbs which begin with a moveable ن a peculiar kind of assimilating change. In such cases, the meeting together

* This form is also in use in the Barbary dialect, See *De Sacy's Crestomathie Arabe*, Vol. II. p. 331.

of two consonants has necessitated the prefixing of the light vowel | (y) to facilitate the pronunciation: e. g. ynnezzel, *I bring down*; ynnefhi *I take away*; instead of nnefhi, nnezzel. This peculiarity appears only to exist when the verb is not preceded by the pronoun jýna, (نا) or some other word ending with a vowel, in which situation it does not acquire a new vowel, but adopts that which precedes it; as, jýn' annezzel *I will bring down*; ñad'annefhi *to-morrow I will take away*, &c.

De Sacy in the *Journal des Savans*, p. 199, has given it as a general rule, that the above assimilation takes place in all verbs beginning with the liquids *l, m, n, r*; but, although we admit, that in a very few instances of verbs beginning with *m*, and *r*, he may be correct, as in the two examples adduced by him from *ryd* and *myt*, a strict examination will make it evident, that such must be regarded only as exceptions from the general rule for the formation of the first person singular future. Those verbs whose initial letter is a moveable | never deviate from the regular form; for we say, nlebbes, nlaqqat, nlaññaq, &c.

If the | is quiescent at the beginning of verbs, the prefix | does not cause them to differ from the general rule, but they preserve their regular form; thus we say, nynzel, nynsa, nyndem, &c. The verb راي is also in this respect an anomaly.

Sometimes the same assimilation is produced if the word begins with *c*, (the English *ch*, in much) *d, s, y, z, t*, and is preceded by the prefix ت (t,) the ت then becomes assimilated to the first letter with an | placed before it. Thus we say انضم yddomm, for انضم tdomm, *thou unitest*; اطيّر yttír, for اطيّر ttír, *she flies*;

أصيب yssib, for تصيب tsib, *she finds*; استقصي yssaqsī, (corrupted from تستقصي) for تسقصي tsaqsi, *you ask*; &c. This anomaly, however, appears only in some verbs, and can by no means be mentioned as a corruption generally practised. Upon the whole, it must appear evident to every one, acquainted with the literal and the colloquial Arabic, that the formation of this tense of the verb is much more regular in the Maltese than in the vulgar dialect of Syria and Egypt. (See Perceval's Grammar, p. 13. &c.)

The present tense is formed by placing the participle of the verb قعد qanad, *to sit*, before the form of the future, which has in the singular قاعد qāʿned, and in the plural قاعدین qyndin, (Vassalli's Gr. p. 42.) *being actually engaged in, sticking to a thing, not running away from it*. It may perhaps not be amiss to remark, that in the East people are accustomed to perform the greater part of their labour sitting, and hence the different shades of activity which the verb قعد presents. The explanation given of its VIII form, in De Sacy's Hariri, p. 12, is very significant, and much to our purpose; اقتعدت الدابة إذا ابتذلت بالركوب ومنه القعدة "The camel *sits* when she is prepared for riding, from which comes القعدة *sitting*." قعدة qonda, or قعرد qanud, is derived, *ad sensum*, from اقتعد to mount the horse, when it is made use of in riding. It signifies, therefore, an animal which is ridden, in which condition it is undoubtedly *active*, though the form which describes its condition is *passive*. The origin of this metaphor combines in a very high degree the idea of sitting activity. Here we perceive an analogy of idea in reference to the dialects of Syria and Egypt, which mark the present, by putting before the form of the future

the intense participle of عمل *namal*, to do, عمل *nam-mâl*, pl. عمالين *nammalîn*, (abbreviated عم *nam*,) *using diligence in doing, not leaving the thing undone.* These dialectical forms of the present tense, originated very likely from the need of having this tense marked with more exactness than it is in the literal Arabic; for as the simple form of the future tense of the classical language is the same with the present, (The المراح says, p. 9, وبالعين في الاشتراك بين الحال والاستقبال *it properly participates both of the present and of the future*) only marking its signification as the future sometimes more distinctly by prefixing to it the letter س or by placing before it the particle سوف ; and its signification as the present, by prefixing to it the letter ل ; it is very natural that the mind sought for and adopted some sign, to fix thereby the forms of both these tenses with more precision.

The future is more distinctly marked by the Maltese, by putting before the simple form of the future the participle سايڠ *sejjer*, *going*. The Syrians use رايڠ *rajyh*, and the Moors ماشي *mâshi*; both of which words have the same signification with the Maltese. (See Perceval's Ar. Gr. p. 14, and Dombay's, p. 20.) The idea of this formation finds some analogy also in Occidental languages: as in the French, 'je vais écrire,' properly, *I go to write*; Italian, 'Io vado scrivere'; with the same meaning, also the English, 'I am going to write,' shews a slight shade of it. The Maltese سايڠ seems to fit particularly well to assist in the forming of the future, in contradistinction to the قاعد used in the formation of the present.

The Syrian dialect uses also another form of the future; that of the letter ب *ba*, or the word بڊ *bydd*,

put before the simple form; (Perceval's Ar. Gr. p. 15.) both of which may have been originally the same word **بد**, though at present its signification has undergone a change, the latter being used to express *necessity*, as **بد يكتب** *byddo jyktob*, *he must write*, answering somewhat to the English *shall*, and the former simply futurity. Or the **ب** may also have been adopted from the Persian. (See Sir Wm. Jones' Pers. Gr. p. 55.) This, however, I hardly think to be the case.

There are a few other peculiarities and corruptions in some verbs; e. g. the forms of the **مر المضاعف** *as marr*, *he went*, change sometimes into the forms of the **مار الاجوف** *as mâr*. The **اكل** *akala*, *he has eaten*, assumes the same form in the preterite, **كال** *kâl*.

The verb **اخذ** *aḥada*, *he has taken*, assumes various forms: as **خا** *hâ*, in the third person masculine singular of the preterite; **خادوا** *hâdu*, in the third person plural; **ياخو** *yâḥu*, in the third person singular masculine of the future, &c.

The verb **راي** *râ*, *he has seen*, has some curious forms; as **تراكو** *trâku*, *behold him*; **تراكونيش** *trâkunîṣ*, *do you not see me?* which I take for forms of the preterite, corrupted from **ارايتم** and **ارايتمونيش**. The first **ا** and the **ي** are hereby omitted, the **ت** is transposed to the beginning, the common corruption of the second form of the plural is used, and the adjunct **ني** with the **ش** instead of the **شي** is regularly put to it. But the corrupt form may also come from the future. As to the word **شي** *ṣaj*, *thing*, abbreviated **ش**, so commonly used in the modern colloquial Arabic, we find an analogy of its use also in the French *ne pas*.

With regard to Particles, I shall confine myself to a few remarks only. The prepositions retain generally

the same form as in the literal Arabic, undergoing sometimes however, a small change; e. g. by losing one of their letters, as:

F' darba, *at once*, from *ضربة في* fy darba, *at one stroke*;
when *في* loses ي .

Bfal, *like*, — *بحال* bifâl, *in the state of*;
here *ب* loses its vowel.

Mbanad, *after*, — *من بعد* myn banad, *after*; with
the loss of *ن* in *من* .

By having one letter added; as,

Lîli, *to me*, instead of *لي* li, id. the first ل pleonastic.

Lîlu, *to him*, — *له* lu, id. do. do.

*By being often compounded with the noun
or pronoun*; as,

Fîs, *instantly*, from *في الساعة* fyssana, *at the hour*.

Ŋalli, *for*, *الذي* nalallazi, *for that which*.

Malli, *immediately on*, *الذي مع* manallazi, *with which*.

The peculiarity of our Adverbs, Conjunctions and other particles, lies chiefly in their compound forms, as:

Ŋalÿu, from *علي اي شي* nala ej uaj, *why?*

Flahhar, — *في الاخر* fylahyr, *finally*.

Ynkella, — *ان كان الذي لا* yn kân yllazi la, *unless*.

Sahansytra, *حتي حين ستري* fiatta hin satara, *until. &c.*

These irregularities, however, are not peculiar to the Maltese only. (See my above remarks on the changes of words; and on the compounds, p. 110—112.)

Besides the peculiarities and irregularities of the form of the etymon, I will give but a few instances of the same, with regard to meaning:

البيت yl bejt, *the terrace*, lit. Ar. *the house*; though it signifies also the pavement of the house, composed of a material similar to the cement of our terraces.

Moreover, it deserves notice, that many of the Maltese in the summer season sleep on the terrace, and hence the original signification of بَات *bât*, *to spend the night*, is very properly applied to it.

الرحل *yr-raħal*, *the village*, lit. Ar. *the journey*, with the whole of its viaticum; and as this in the East frequently includes the tent, and in large caravansaries a number of tents, with different families of men, animals &c, the Maltese very properly designate thereby, a village.

زامل *zýmél*, *a horse*; lit. Ar. *any brisk animal*.

الناقة *yn-nýqa*, *the cradle*; lit. Ar. *a she camel*.

أبيض *abjad*, *white*; lit. Ar. *the same*. On fast-days, however, it also signifies milk in Malta. This is a little remnant of the coloured mental reservation system of the Jesuits of ancient days.

رمضان *Randan*, *time of fasting*; lit. Ar. *the ninth month of the Muhammedan year; the Muhammedan month of rigorous fasting*. I wonder that the Church has suffered here the use of the above word in this sense. I do not think that any of the Oriental Churches applied it to their own fasting. Gesenius suggests whether it is not a corruption of *Quarantine*? (See p. 65. Treatise on the Maltese.)

جبلَة *gebla*, *a stone*; *large piece of a rock*; lit. Ar. جبل *gebel*, *a mountain*.

مطرح *mytrafi*, *matrass*; lit. Ar. *any place to lie on*, which quite agrees with the habit of the poorer Maltese, who makes any thing his matrass, an old garment, the hard ground, his soft stone, &c.

سدة *sodda* *a bed*; lit. Ar. *the door of the house*, and chiefly the place about it, which in the East is generally furnished with benches or raised seats where the master

of the house and all visitors sit and lounge; also, a kind of sofa. The preceding remark upon the word *mytraħ*, may also serve as explanatory of this word, especially in reference to ancient days.

بازل *bÿzel*, *diligent*, Ar. *very clever*. The قلموس calls البازل *the most accomplished practitioner*. I cannot help remarking that Dr. Freitag in his Ar. Lexicon, generally very correct, has mistaken the قلموس in his translation of the following words رجل تبزلة بالكسر وتبزلة and تبزلة by all of which, تبزلة with the Kesra under the ت, and تبزلة and تبزلة with the Teshdeed over the ل is only meant, *a man of small stature*, "*Vis brevis staturæ*;" and not as Freitag has: *Qui res magnas suscipit, geritque, brevis staturæ*. Neither the accusative case, nor the feminine gender of مشددة admits of his translation. Besides, it is the manner of the قلموس to make frequent use of the word مشددة by way of explanation. Perhaps the learned scholar might be led into this mistake through the following امر ذو شدة which, however, bears no relation to the preceding مشددة.

حرك *ħarrak*, *to bring a law-suit against one*, lit. Ar. *to excite*. The first form has the signification of refusing to pay one's debt. The signification of the second form, therefore, in the Maltese, is quite regular, according to that signification of this form, which is called النسبة *attributing*, (attributing to some one the refusal of paying the money, respect or obedience &c, which are due,) though no Ar. Lexicon has noticed this signification, either in the literal or vulgar language.* The التسمية in the grammar of my learned

* As to the نسبة see Dr. Lee's Heb. Gr. § 162, p. 112. Guadagnoli's Ar. Gr. p. 34, also marks this signification of the second form.

and respected friend, Dr. Lee, I take for a typographical mistake, instead of النسبة. I have consulted several grammars of Arabic authors on this question, but none mention التسمية, they all have النسبة; yet in the true spirit of a grateful scholar, I shall be open to, and much obliged to him for further information. Sáad yd-Din yt-Taftasani, in his Commentary on the Grammar of yl Nozzi, says: وهو للتكثير في الفعل نحو:

جولت وطولت او في الفاعل نحو موتت الابل
او في المفعول نحو غلقت الابواب—ولنسبة
المفعول الي اصل الفعل نحو فسقته اي نسبته
الي الفسق وللتعددية نحو فرحته وللإسلب نحو
جلد البعير اي ازال جلده

"This form denotes the augmenting of the *action*, that is, it denotes its intensity: as, 'I have travelled and journeyed *much*;' or the *actor*, as, '*many* camels have died;' or the *object acted upon*, as, 'she has *often* shut the doors.' It denotes also, the *referring of the object acted upon to the original action*, (the attributing to the object, something of the property of the action; or the mentioning something of the action's property by way of application to the object acted upon,) as; 'I have alluded to him with regard to his licentiousness;' 'I have attributed to him, or accused him, of licentiousness.'* Again

* The Camus has a sentence on the word خطأ which will serve to elucidate النسبة in the second form : خطأ تخطئة : تخطينا قال له اخطات، 'He accused him of error and vice; he said to him, you have committed folly.'

the second form renders the first form *transitive*; as, 'I have caused him to rejoice.' It also denotes deprivation; as, 'he has skinned the camel,' that is, has taken off its skin."

Vurlavi, in the Preface to his Dictionary, compiled from the قاموس and the صحاح speaks in the same way on this subject; only having غلقت الابواب 'she has often shut the door,' instead of غلقت الابواب; which confirms my opinion, that this kind of augmentative of the second form should be referred to the repetition of the action, and not to the multiplication of the object acted upon. Not as if she had shut *many* doors, but had *repeatedly* shut the door, or *doors*.

Several other verbs exhibit shades of signification, which differ from the literal Arabic; as, واهل uahhal, *to fasten, to perplex, to deceive*, lit. Ar. *to throw into the dirt*. This metaphor is very significant in the Maltese, whilst the signification of the literal Arabic would be but seldom applicable to Malta.

حارس hares, *to look at*; lit. Ar. in the first form, *to guard, to watch*, &c. It has not the third form.

عاد يعيد nâd jnid, *to say*, lit. Ar. *to repeat*. It seems that this is one of the few remnants of the Phœnician language, and that part of it was exchanged with the Ar. قال qâl, for conveniency's sake, since the Maltese particle عاد nâd, *not yet*, would clash with its signification.

قلع qalan, *to extract*, like the literal Ar.; but with the metaphorical sense also, *to gain money, elicit, and as it is difficult to be obtained, to extract it as it were by squeezing*.

ظن danna, lit. Ar. *to think*; the singular use of this verb, however, in the Maltese, gives also its signification the appearance of singularity. It is chiefly used in the

first person singular of the future, apocopated from **اظن** as : **ظنه رجل عارف** donnu râgel nâref, *I think he is a well informed man*; **ظني منسي** donni mynsi, *I count myself forgotten*.

As the verb **ظن** is one of the verbs called **أفعال القلوب** the adjunct **ي** may be put instead of **نفسى** or **ذاتى** (See **بحث المطالب** printed at Malta, p. 460.) This verb has been regarded as impersonal. Agius calls it a voce Punica, signifying, pare, it *appears*: as, donni, *it appears to me*.

Vassalli translates **ظنه** donnu, with *videtur, it appears*; it may be easily observed, that the sense turns out to be eventually the same, according to both views. The difference between my idea and that of Vassalli and Agius, is, that I can trace the Arabic etymology of this word easily, both as to the lexicon and grammar, whilst they must be satisfied with its being a *Punic* word, the tracing of whose *vero significato*, Agius leaves to other people. (See Gesenius' Treatise on the Maltese, p. 50.)

Again, the **ظني** quoted by Gesenius from Hirt's Ar. Gr. is not the Maltese **ظني**. In Hirt's Gr. it is a substantive, and as such, inapplicable to the Maltese, in the present case: for instance, **ظنك طيب** donnok tajjeb, does not mean in our dialect, *thy opinion is good*; that, if used, would be spelled with an *a*; viz. *dannek tajjeb*; but it means: '*in my estimation you are good*.'

فتيت ftit, *little*, lit. Ar. *a very small piece, a crumb*.

حفنة hafna, *much*; lit. Ar. *so much as may be held in both hands*; which in Arabia Felix is called *little*.

محببة في mhabba fi, *on account of*, lit. Ar. *out of love to*. I think the Italian "per amore" has influenced the

Maltese in the production of this, as well as of some other phrases.

For the Oriental scholar we beg to insert here a dialogue written by a Maltese in pure Maltese, together with a translation thereof into the Egyptian dialect; and after this, there will follow a Maltese hymn written in Roman characters, by Dr. L. M. Tommasi, on the occasion of the Cholera.



DIALOGUE.

Maltese.

- ١ صحة وسق حبيب*
٢ مرحبا بيك لي غسلت جيت فينك دا
الزمان كم نلي مانراك*
٣ عش واحد مشاغل وانت انقص تضرر
خلاف فين تكون*
٤ نضهر يك نستطع نضهرانا دايم محبط*
٥ التعبيط ماينقصش نجزوا خير لله*
٦ في ايش انت تتحابط بحال اسا انت الله
يباركك اظنك وجه الورد ومن الاخر ضربه
اللي رايتك تقويت وصرت ظنك عجل*
٧ وانت ما تتعالقش خشنت ظنك جرف*
٨ انا مرت موره سا غودش كان لي ناخوشي
طرف جهرتا*
٩ وانا جيت من صقليه اربعة ايام ثلو وفي
حسابي نرجع*
١٠ لاترجع عنده يكون مارلك طيب الشغل*
١١ كنت عبيت تعيية قمع وهون بعتهما طيب*
١٢ هون في مالطه القمع صقلي قط ما فيه تلف
(ان)يك ما ينشتراش غالي*
١٣ انا نمور في حسابي سا مسينه دين الضربه
ناخو معي فتيت مغزول وتسكر وفي الرجعة
نعبي بالزيت من هم او من كالاقرىا*

DIALOGUE.

Egyptian.

في امان الله •
اهلا ومرحبا بس اتي غسلت جيت انت فين دا
الوقت لي زمان مارايتك •
كمن الواحد مشغول وانت كمان ما تظهرش الا
محل ما تكون •
اظهر لو كنت اقدر ولكن انا دايا اسعي •
السعي ما ينقصش الحمد لله •
انت تسعي باي دا الوقت الله يبارك فيك كان
وجهك وجه الوردة ومن اخر نوبة الي رايتك
فيها تقويت وصرت كاذك (ماشنا الله) عجل •
وانت كمان بلا هزار سمنت وصرت كاذك وعمل •
انا رحت روحة الي غودش كان لي هناك حاجة
لميتها •
وانا جيت كمان من صقليه من مند اربعة
ايام وفي حساي اني ارجع •
لترجع لازم يكون شغلك هناك نجح •
كنت عبيت تعبيرة قمح وبعتها هنا طيب •
هنا في مالطه القمح الصقلي ما يخسرش ابدا اذا
كان ما ينشراش غالي •
في حساي اتي اسافر النوبة دي الي مسينه اخذ
معي شوية غزل وسكر وفي الرجعة اعبي زيت
من هناك او من كالاقر يا •

- ١٤ يك تمورهم اري تسطعش تجيب لي معك
فتيت حرير*
- ١٥ طيب ينأ نراك شي يومين قبل متي نكون
سائر*
- ١٦ ايوا تبقاش ما ترانيش عندي هم شي
ميتين اوقيه فضة نعطيهم لك تنفقهم لي*
- ١٧ نفهم انا دان يكون على الاخر تا الداخلة*
- ١٨ وانا علي الاخر تا الداخلة حسبت نرخي لها
سا طريبولي وبنغازي نجيب تعبیه فراد
وشعير داك اللي نصيب*
- ١٩ وايش تريد تعمل من القعاد ما تعمل شين*
- ٢٠ ازدا حد ما يريد يخدم ويحمر ومن بعد يتلق
انت تعرف شي جري لي شهرين ثلو جبت
ثمانية مد فول من ليشندره وبقي زمان في
وجهي ما اسطعتش نبيعه بحقه والانقص
خلوني نبعته برا عش قالوا لي الي كل
مكان يرثمي وضلنك جاي اسا يكون لي
نبيعه بالتلف*
- ٢١ هو ذا الزمان النيكوسيو ساير لورا بحال قابرو*
- ٢٢ اسا عدت سوا ازدا عندك اربع حبات
تقعد تاكلهم*
- ٢٣ ما نعرفش نعيدلك لما الاخير نعرف الي كل
ضربه بالتلف ما يصحش*

اذا كنت تروح هناك انظر ان كنت تقدر تجيب
 لي معك شوية حرير *
 طيب انا اراك قبل ما اسافر بيومين *
 ايوا ماتطولش عندي قد ميتين اوقيه فضة
 ومراذي اعطيهم لك علي شان تصرفهم لي *
 انا اظن ان دي يكون في اخر للجمعة الداخلة *
 انا كمان في اخر للجمعة الداخلة اسافر الي طرابلس
 وبذغازي اتسوق تسويقة بقر وشعير من الي اجد *
 وانت تريد تعمل اي من القعادمات عملش حاجة *
 ولكن ما حدش يريد بعد ان يخدم ويحترانه
 يخسر انت تعرف الي جري لي من شهرين جبت
 ثمانية مد فول من اسكندرية وبقي زمان في
 وجهي ما قدرتش ابيعه بحقه حتي ولا خلوني
 ابعته برا وقالوا لي انه يترمي كدا في كل مكان
 واذا دام الحال كدا لازم ابيعه الان بالخسارة *
 السبب في الزمان دي ماشي الي ورازي ابوجلبو *
 دا الوقت قلت الدغري ولكن اذا كان عندك
 اربعة فضة تقعد وقاتلهم *
 ما اعرفش اقول لك، اينا هو الاحسن ولكن اعرف
 انه اذا كان كل نوبة بالخسارة مايصحش *
 صحيح اذا كان كل مره تجي الدعوي حادة واما
 لو كان الواحد نوبة يرمي ونوبة يخسر ومره يسوي
 واخري يداوي لكان علي كل حال يتحملها ولكن

- ٢٩ وعل هك انا تقترحت واعطيتها بين فلوس
وجهاز علي ست الاف اوقية اما دون ما تعرفش
كم كسروني الله يحارس تحييي واحدة حزينه *
- ٣٠ لكل حد الله يبعث له سكنت ما يحتاج من بعد
انت ست الاف اوقية مما هما شين عليك *
- ٣١ شين ما هما اه تعرفش ايش نعرف نعيد لك
للتخزير متي تقتله تكون تعرف كم يزن *
- ٣٢ وخليك من الكلم انت في الزمان اللي من يسطع
يعرف كم قلعت كل واحدة كنت تحجيبها زوج
من يعرف كم كدست دول العشر سنين *
- ٣٣ ايوا ازدا تيجو (تاخذ) ماترد الاسوار تهد
احنا من سبع سنين لهون دايم بالتلف ودايم
ناكلو من جوا *
- ٣٤ ما انتاش وحدك كل حد ساير الورا وبك
تبقى سايرة هك ما نعرفش شي يصير مننا
عش من الحزين علي الاعر *
- ٣٥ يا الله ما يكثرش كلما يمور يظلم *
- ٣٦ وسا فين نبقو سايرين اعر من اللي احنا ما
نسطعوش نكونو ان كان لا نموروا في الشين *
- ٣٧ هو في الشين نتموا نحي اليوم ونحي غدا
ولا تعمل قط قاع الصندوق مع لير تراه *
- ٣٨ ملا (بلي) احنا نروا ارواحنا *
- ٤١ ايوا حبيب ابقى بالسلامه *
- ٤٠ الله معك *

دي وكله ستة الاف ريال هما عندك كلاشي *
 كلاشي عندي اه تعرف اقول لك اي ما تعرفش
 وزن الخنزير كم الا لما تقتله *

ياخي نانه انت كنت في زمان المتجر الي
 من يقدر يعرف كم كسبت فيه فكنت تجيب
 الطاق طاقين من يعرف قد اي كدست في
 دكمي العشر سنين *

ايوا ولكن اذا كنت تاخذ وماترد الاسوار تهد
 احنا من سبع سنين وجاي لحد دي الوقت دايما
 بالخسارة وناكل من جوا الكيس *

ما انتاش وحدك كدا كل حد اخرته الي ورا
 وان كان الحال تبقي علي المعدل دي ما اعرفش
 يجري علينا اي لان احوالنا من الوحش الي الاوحش *
 ان شا الله ما يكثرش لانه كلما طول ينعكس
 بزيادة *

ولحد فين تكون النهاية اوحش من كدا ما
 يمكنش يكون ماذا والا العدم *
 نعم في العدم ننتهي ولكن اذا ما كنتش تشتغل
 اليوم ولاغدا قعر الصندوق بيان قوام *
 امال نحو نتقابل بعد ان *

طيب تبقي علي خير *
 السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته *

TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE DIALOGUE.

1. How do you do friend?
2. You are welcome. The moment I had washed myself I came; where do you stay at this time? What a long time it is since I have seen you.
3. One is always busy. Neither do you make your appearance any where except where you are to be found.
4. When I can, I appear in public, but I am always in troubles.
5. Troubles are never wanting, thank God.
6. But what is your present trouble? God bless you, you appear fresh as the rose, and since I saw you last you have fattened and have become like a calf.
7. Dont joke. You have stoutened and grown like a giant.
8. I have just been to Gozo, where I had to receive some debts, which I have collected.
9. And I came from Sicily four days ago, and intend to return thither.
10. By your returning, it appears your business must succeed well..
11. I took in a cargo of corn, and I sold it well here.
12. In the Sicilian corn trade, people are never losers at Malta, if it is not bought dear.
13. This time I intend to go to Messina, to take with me some cotton and sugar, and on my return, to bring some oil either from thence or from Calabria.
14. If you go there, try whether you cannot bring me some silk.
15. Very well, I will see you a couple of days previous to my departure.
16. Well then, do not delay to see me, I have about two hundred dollars worth of silver; I will give it to you to lay out for me.
17. I suppose it will be toward the end of next week.

18. And I thought toward the end of next month to visit Tripoli and Bengazi, to fetch a cargo of oxen and barley, and whatever else I might find.

19. And what is one to do? In indolence and ease one will do nothing.

20. But no one likes to trouble himself, or to venture upon the sea, and after all to be loser. You know the misfortune I had two months ago; I bought 800 bushels of beans from Alexandria. They have been a long time upon my hands. I could not sell them at their cost, and I was prevented from sending them away, upon learning that they were selling every where for nothing, and more are continually coming, and I shall be constrained to sell them with loss.

21. Now-a-days, business goes all awry like a crab.

22. Now you have told the truth, but you possess four farthings which you can live upon at your ease.

23. I do not know what to tell you, or what is for the best; I know that it will never do to be always loser.

24. Indeed it is so; when every one is unlucky. If one were to gain one time and to lose another, so as to make up at one time what he loses at another, he might bear with it; but going every time under water, one will lose his breath, without being able to rise again.

25. Thus it is. But what is to be done? I also might have done pretty well hitherto, but as I have just given my daughter in marriage, I feel that she has well nigh stripped me. I had ten Scudi, and I gave her the half of them to put her in comfortable circumstances.

26. You did right, you have got rid of her; for girls are like the rheumatism, and let me tell you boys in these days are not much better, for my boys have quite drained me. To whom did you marry her?

27. To such an one, the son of Miklub, his only son, and he seems to be a man of discretion, for hitherto they have done well.

28. Success to you; you knew how to find him. He has a good deal of money, and will have more yet; for he has two uncles, old Priests, no one knows how much they possess; avaricious men they are, who

do not even eat to satisfy their hunger, lest they should expend too much; and if they see one perishing for want, they will not afford one farthing for his relief. I suspect they have so much money that they do not know its amount.

29. And therefore I felt myself constrained to give her in money and outfit about 6000 dollars; but you cannot think how much this knocked me up. May God prevent any new misfortune from overcoming me.

30. God grants to every one what is needful for him. As for the rest, 6000 dollars is only a trifle for you.

31. Indeed, a trifle! Do you know what I can tell you; the sow, if you kill her, you will learn how much she weighs.

32. Dont talk nonsense. In the time of commerce, who can tell how much you gained. By each one you gained two. Who knows how much you heaped up in those ten years.

33. Yes, but if you take away without replacing you will pull down the walls. During the last seven years, we have been constantly losers, and have been living upon the capital.

34. You are not alone; every one is going backward; and if things continue thus, I do not know what will yet become of us; for we are going on from bad to worse.

35. I hope that these evils will not increase. The farther we advance, the darker it grows.

36. And what shall we come to, since worse we cannot be, except we come to nothing.

37. It is so; we shall end in nothing. Take away to-day, and take away to-morrow, and putting in nothing, the bottom of the coffer will speedily be seen.

38. Well, we shall see each other.

39. Yes, friend; remain in peace!

40. God be with you!



MALTESE HYMN.

- 1 O cbir Alla min tal hniena,
Hniena fis jcolloc minna!
Jec hzunitna bosta kibret;
Acbar hia il Hniena minna.
- 2 Hanin Alla, Messier taghna,
Li tait l'Ibnec biex jifdina;
Hniena lilec kighed jitlob,
Demmu imciarciar già ghalina.
- 3 O Gesù, li ghax habbeitna
Fuk Salib hajtec halleit;
Dan il kiefer mard tal Corla,
Nitolbuc li tuarrab bgheit.
- 4 Demm imkaddes, Piaghi imkazza
Ta Gesù Redentur taghna.
Issa il uakt akbsu ghalina
Biex fi hdanu ilcoll jilkaghna.
- 5 O Gesù! mahbub Gesù,
Bi dnubietna ahna slabnich!
Jisghob binha: deh! ahfrinna,
Uarrab minna dal castich.
- 6 O Gesù myl meut rebbieh,
O Gesù dejem imbierec,
Min edin il Corla ehlisna,
U mil corla ta Missierec.
- 7 Haja, Hleua, Tama taghna,
O Maria, Omm hanina,
Min dal mard sa biex nehilsu,
Nitolboc titlob ghalina.
- 8 Cbir Apostlu, imkaddes Paulu,
Missier kau i tal Maltin,
Int mil kiefra Corla ehlisna,
Thalliniex hec mahkurin.

TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.

- 1 O Great God of boundless pity,
To us sinners mercy shew;
Though our num'rous sins displease thee,
Let thy boundless mercy flow.
- 2 Great in mercy, thou hast given
For our ransom Christ thy Son;
And his blood, since he has risen,
Pleads forgiveness for our sin.
- 3 Christ, to shew thy love transcending,
On the cross thy life didst give.
This fierce Cholera, now us scourging,
Stop it Lord, to thee we cleave.
- 4 By thy holy blood and bruises,
Jesus, Saviour of the world,
At this urgent moment save us,
Safe into thy bosom fold.
- 5 Jesus, oh beloved Jesus!
Thee our sins have crucified;
Lord have pity and forgive us,
Let thy love thy judgment guide.
- 6 Jesus, death's triumphant conqueror,
We for ever bless thy name.
Save us from fierce Cholera's power,
And from wrath's eternal flame.
- 7 Mary, thou our life and sweetness,
Faithful children's fairest hope,
Plead deliverance from this sickness,
Praying, we to thee look up.
- 8 Holy Paul, thou great Apostle,
Mighty father of this isle,
Send deliverance to thy people,
Leave us not so poor, so vile.

ADDENDA.



I beg to express the hope that the condemnatory judgment pronounced at p. 7, on the statement concerning the Phœnician language in Sig. Micallef's Historical Catechism, may not be taken as an unfavourable criticism on the whole of his little work. On the contrary, I consider it a useful help for the education of children ; and one of the chief objects I had in view in referring to it, was, that my so doing might lead to a more correct opinion on this subject in its next edition, which would certainly be an improvement.

